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# A FAIR SAXON.

## A Novel.

BY

JUSTIN McCARTHY,

AUTHOR OF

"MISS MISANTHROPE," "DEAR LADY DISDAIN," ETC., ETC.



*A NEW EDITION.*

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# A FAIR SAXON.

## CHAPTER I.

A FINE TREE, according to the poet's pretty conceit, stands lonely in the North, wrapped in a mantle of ice and snow; it sleeps and dreams of a slender palm which far away in the East mourns lonely on the burning sand. Let us paraphrase the notion. On a single and solitary height rising out of a broad and melancholy waste through which flows a river, often rain-swollen and almost always misty, stands the ruin of what was once a castle, but which now is given over wholly to the keeping of the bats and owls. On a serene, bright, lonely common stands a suburban cottage, luxuriously fitted up, only a little too large to be a veritable cottage ornée. A sea divides these two dissimilar structures; and they might be described as far more rigorously divided by a very ocean of traditional, national, and social differences. Yet, if one might idealize brick and stone as Heine has idealized living timber, he could imagine the ruin on the hill yearning by anticipation towards the cottage on the bright common, or this latter haunted in dreams by the sombre form of the companion it has never seen. Perhaps the whole mystery and meaning of this story may be prematurely revealed and exhausted for the reader by this little opening allegory. But there is hardly enough of mystery in the story anyhow to make the reader complain of losing it by premature revelation.

For the present we have to do only with the story of the cottage and those who inhabit it; and we leave the ruin to its desolate height, its misty river, the birds who make their home in the ivy of the castle, and that heron who, perched on a little rock projecting over the river's brink, watches there patiently for his chance of a prey.

On the utter verge of London, in the county of Surrey, is the broad, beautiful gorse-covered common, wild enough to be in the heart of the country, and yet reached by a railway in half an hour from the heart of the town. In fine weather an encampment of squatting gipsies may still be seen now and then on this common; and sometimes on a hot summer day a pedestrian has almost stumbled over a brown-legged gipsy girl or boy lying fast asleep on the daisies and among the gorse. On clear days, as one looks towards the region where London lies, the Victoria Tower and the Clock Tower may be seen rising up as if they sprang sheer and straight from the further edge of the common; and more rarely there appears dimly behind and oddly mixed up with them the dome of St. Paul's. The scene then is very curious and picturesque. The flat and solitary common, with these towers and this dome and nothing else upon its horizon, seems as if it were intended to show how London might look if it were to become a Baalbec.

One part of the common, that near the railway station, and which luckily for the picturesque loneliness of other parts, lies at the bottom of a slope, and is now almost hidden from our sight, has been encroached upon a good deal by modern villas. But where we are now supposed to stand we only see one house, and that is surrounded by high walls and trees. The walls are so high and the gate is so pretentious, that a visitor unaccustomed to the place might expect to find a stately mansion within. He finds nothing of the kind, however; only a sort of overgrown cottage, to one side of which a new wing or *succursale* has been added, giving it a lopsided appearance. The porch and one side are of the orthodox cottage form. The porch is ivy-covered, and the windows are lattices. But on the other side there is a modern room, with windows opening down to the level of the little lawn: and above this room another storey is raised; and this part of the building at least would be entirely commonplace, genteel, and handsome, if it were not for the oddity of appearance given to it by its inseparable connexion with the lattices, the ivy-covered porch, and the low, thatched roof of the other part.

In this house lived Mr. Joseph Aspar, of London, when he was at home. But he stayed in town a good deal, and did not sleep in Surrey on an average more than four nights out of the week. Sundays he never failed. People said he was a rich man, and certainly his house on the Surrey common

was richly and even luxuriously furnished. Some persons said slightingly that he was a pawnbroker in the city, and that the gold and silver and parian and glass which loaded the walls and tables and chiffoniers of his Surrey cottage were the deposits of his clients. Mr. Joseph Aspar was not exactly a pawnbroker, and his business did not lie in the city; but the calumnious imputation was not wholly without some hint of excuse. Mr. Aspar certainly had an office or rather chambers in one of the principal London thoroughfares west of Temple Bar, and his chambers were over a huge shop, full of costly paintings, marble statues, rare old china, precious bronzes, fantastic Eastern images and Eastern jewels and gems, superb pieces of plate, gorgeous missals, antique swords, shields, and breastplates. It was in fact a great curiosity shop, with a pawnbroker's licence hidden away behind its avowed attractions. Mr. Aspar went up to his chambers just as often through the shop as through the private stair in the side street adjoining; and there was a general impression that he owned the whole concern, and that the nominal proprietor of the art treasures was merely his clerk. Mr. Aspar was ostensibly an accountant and agent; almost avowedly a negociator of bills and lender of money.

In the Surrey cottage Mr. Aspar kept his two daughters, who were never allowed to visit his town establishment, and in fact knew little or nothing about it. Many years ago when Joe Aspar was a young and rather handsome man, he had made it the object of his ambition to marry "a lady." He succeeded somehow in marrying a portionless girl of good family, who loved him, and whom he loved. Succeeding to his father's money and business, he bought and enlarged the Surrey cottage, and made it a luxurious cage for his bird. Her own family, of course, cut her dead. She had two daughters, and died soon after the birth of the younger. The one bright, sweet, sad, triumphant memory of poor Aspar was, that he had married a lady: his one fondest ambition was that her daughters should likewise be ladies.

In the room with the windows opening to the lawn, a pretty little scene was going on, for the sole enjoyment of the performer, one day in early June, three or four years ago. A girl was gravely and gracefully dancing part of a minuet to the music of her own voice, subdued to a low humming sound. She had bright brown hair and deep grey eyes,

which combination of colours, not often brought together in hair and eyes, made her look peculiar as well as pretty. She had a slender and graceful figure, to which she endeavoured to impart as much stateliness and dignity of movement as possible, enacting her part of the minuet as she had seen it on the stage in *Don Giovanni*. As she danced, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror, and the glimpse was not enough. She was seized with a desire to see how her feet and her pretty slippers looked. She stopped and glanced around the room. The mirror could not possibly be taken down. So she quietly mounted the dining-table, and then, with skirts daintily picked up, she began again her slow and sentimental measure.

Suddenly the door opened, and the girl dropped her skirts and stood still, but did not seem much discomposed.

"Oh, Carpenter, it's only you."

"Yes, Miss Jennie."

Carpenter was a tall lean man, with a high forehead and peaked chin, looking in face like an austere saint in a mediæval picture. He was dressed in solemn black, and bore a huge basket in his hands.

"Then we're going to have a dinner party to-day, Carpenter?" the young lady assumed.

"Not exactly a party, Miss Jennie; only one gentleman."

"Anyhow, you want this table?"

"If you please, Miss Jennie."

She leaped from the table to the ground as quickly and lightly as a school-boy might have done.

"Who's the gentleman, Carpenter—and are we to be there?"

"You are to be there, Miss Jennie."

"Did papa say so?"

"He did, Miss Jennie."

"I'm very glad. Now who's the gentleman?"

"An M.P., Miss Jennie."

"Oh, indeed! Such swells! Mr. Gladstone, Carpenter, or Mr. Disraeli?"

Carpenter almost smiled.

"No, Miss Jennie, only an Irish member, I'm told: Mr. Tyrone."

The girl had been arranging some of her curls at the mirror. She paused and turned round, her grey eyes opening wide.

"Mr. Tyrone? Maurice Tyrone—the man whose speeches we read in the papers—the man that the papers are always abusing?"

"I dare say it's him, miss."

"How on earth can papa have come to know him, and what can he have to do with him? Why, I thought he was a most tremendous swell, and great for horse races, and pigeon shooting, and all that sort of thing."

Carpenter coughed slightly. He had not much difficulty in understanding why a tremendous swell might possibly condescend to dine with Mr. Joseph Aspar. But he said nothing: only went on with his preparations for the dinner. Carpenter was a person whose general position in Mr. Aspar's business Mr. Aspar's daughters knew nothing about. He always came out to the Surrey cottage to arrange for a dinner party, and to wait at table. The cottage had only two maid-servants, and a gardener, who acted as coachman on occasion. Whenever Carpenter made his appearance, the young ladies knew that his coming heralded a little dinner party. Sometimes they dined with their father's guests, sometimes they did not.

"Good morning, Carpenter. How do you do, and when's papa coming?" asked another young lady, who now bustled into the room. This was the elder sister, Alicia. She was taller, darker, and more fully formed than Jennie, and she had a nose a little more aquiline, complexion less bright in the day, a firm step, white hands, and a voice in which there was just the least possible sound of a lisp. Decidedly a handsome girl, only not girlish.

"Alicia," broke in her sister, "do you know who is coming to dine here to-day?"

"No, dear. Who is it?"

"Mr. Tyrone—Maurice Tyrone, you know."

"Indeed! I shall be curious to see him."

"Yes, but isn't he a man of very high family, and with ridiculous notions, and very violent and extravagant? and isn't he a terrible scapegrace, and all that?"

"They say he's very wild. But we can't help that, dear."

"No, only," she glanced around, Carpenter had just left the room, "only I don't like the idea of papa's bringing people here who are not like him or like us, and despise him in their hearts, and will despise us too. Papa is only something in business, and these people scorn him—I know they do."

"What do you know of Mr. Tyrone?"

"Oh, yes, I heard him talked of at Aunt Lucy's, and they spoke of him as a person who believes himself descended from some absurd old Irish kings, and is as proud as a Spaniard, and as bad as—oh, well, I don't know. Such a man would only despise us."

The elder sister involuntarily glanced at her own face and form in the mirror. The younger laughed, and said—

"Just so, Alicia, all very fine! If beauty were like death, my dear, and levelled all distinctions, I should say a duchess would be no peer of yours. But do you think this man's wife and daughters would look at us, or meet papa? I don't: and I do so wish that we stood firmly in our own place, and never tried to go out of it, or to drag people into our place who don't belong to it. I never go even to Aunt Lucy's without feeling ashamed and angry with myself—the idea of our dining with people who wouldn't receive papa!"

"Papa doesn't care, dear; and I don't think Aunt Lucy means it to be supposed that there is a compliment conferred on us by an invitation to dinner."

"Well, I don't like the whole thing. I wish papa would put me into his business somehow, and give me something to do. I wouldn't try to be above my calling, whatever it were. The summer would look bright, and the birds would sing, and great men and women would write books for me all the same, I suppose? Oh, thank God for that summer-light and the books! I think I should like to be Madame Roland, and to go to the scaffold, on just such a lovely day as this! To wear a white dress, and look brave and fearless, and to smile and make other people weep, and then take a last look at the beautiful, beautiful sky, and die like a queen!"

"What a self-conceited little thing you are," the elder sister said, with a kindly smile.

"Am I? Well, one would need some self-conceit now and then in a life like this. No matter! I'm going to lie on the grass, and look up at the sky and dream dreams."

So she opened one of the windows and went out on the little lawn, and lay on the soft grass under a tree. When she was a younger girl she used to climb into the branches of this very tree, and coil herself up there and look through the boughs up to the sky and be rocked by the wind, and be so tantalized with longings, so filled with joy, and so, oh *so* happy! It must be owned that in those childish days she

liked to fill the measure of her delight by taking a piece of bread and marmalade with her. All the witchery of intellect and sensuousness and longing and hope can give nothing afterwards to surpass the exquisite pleasure and pain of rocking in the boughs of a tree on a summer day, and looking through the leaves up to the blue sky and eating bread and marmalade. But of late years the marmalade had lost its savour, and Jennie took a book instead, and climbed into the tree no more, but lay down at its foot. Oh, the unspeakable joy of some new delightful book distracting her from the branches and the blue sky; and then the leaves and sky compelling her for a moment to lay down the book. There was evidently a dash of the sensuous always in this half poetic little creature, of which her calmer sister had none. When they were both children the elder would always eat her bread and read her book seated properly in a chair in the nursery, and was quite content when the marmalade was done and she had eaten enough; and never thought of enhancing the fleeting joy by scrambling into the branches of a tree.

Jennie lay under the tree. She did not seat herself under it, or recline under it, but simply threw herself on the ground, and saw nothing but the green leaves and the sky—nothing, that is to say, which she cared to have pointed out to any one else. But through these leaves, throbbing in the gentle breeze, and in the measureless distance of that sky, she saw and felt wonders. She saw the East, and Persia—the Persia of romance and fables—and the Islands of the Blest: she heard the lapping of distant waters; she felt the influence of youth and of quickening blood; she knew longing and poetry and pain, and in the murmur of the branches received, unconscious, the breath of coming passion.

Meanwhile the elder sister went to the shelves of the library and took down "Dod's Parliamentary Companion," and turned to the name of Mr. Maurice Tyrone. She found by the date of his birth that he was only twenty-six years old, that his address was Clarges Street and Reform Club, and some castle, county something or other, Ireland; and that there was no mention of his having a wife. Whereupon she looked at herself again, and more than once, in a glass; and then went to her own room and pulled out all the dresses she had—they were not a few—all the laces, chemisettes, cuffs, collars, petticoats, and satin boots, and began to consider how she had best dress for dinner.

She heard the sound of wheels, and looking out saw that her father had come. She saw too that he stopped and talked with Jennie for a moment or two, but no more, and that he entered the house with the air of one discouraged or depressed.

"Jennie is in one of her odd fits," she said to herself. The elder sister was never out of humour or disturbed. She could step into her shower-bath humming a piece of classic music on a cold, raw morning, and pull the string and keep on the classic music just the same, undisturbed, and without marring a note, if she thought it right to do so.

A tap was heard at her door: she opened it and Mr. Aspar came in.

Mr. Aspar was a man of fifty-five. He was short and rather stout. He had thin, fair hair, and a broad, bald forehead, bulbous and shining, and pale grey eyes. His hands were white and fat, and he often rubbed them together in a gentle and deprecatory sort of way. He was handsomely dressed, but always without reference to current fashion. He wore a black velvet waistcoat as part of his walking costume, and had a velvet collar to his coat. His only ornament, except for a heavy gold chain, was a remarkably fine emerald in his shirt front. There was a certain expression in his face, as he kissed his eldest daughter, which told her that something had disturbed him.

"Jennie is a little out of temper to-day, my love?" he asked, mildly.

"I suppose so, papa. I don't know why; she was not so when I spoke to her last. But you don't let that put you out?"

"Oh, no, my love, no. But then it does put one out a little, you know. I want everything to go on very well to-day. Carpenter has told you who is coming to dinner?"

"Yes, papa—Mr. Tyrone. Isn't he rather—don't people say——"

"I suppose they do; but I fancy it's all exaggeration. He seems to me a very gentlemanlike sort of young man. Fact is, my dear, he has been brought to me by a gentleman of the greatest importance,—the very greatest importance, and he is going to tell me all his affairs; and I have it on very good authority that his position is likely to be a remarkably good one, much better than people think. And I wish that we should all—all, my dear—show the greatest attention and deference to him, and that sort of thing. I want you to dress very nicely, love; not showy, you know, but as if you

were used to this every day. And look here; here's a volume, a work, a history, of some kind, all about his family. I hunted for it everywhere, and got it at last, and I want you to read it up, you know, and be able to say something nice about it that would please him."

Alicia took the book with a look of alarm, for she dreaded pedigrees and genealogies, and yet felt determined to do something to get the contents of this into her mind.

"Now, my love, what about your dress—what do you mean to wear?"

Mr. Aspar was very fond of both his daughters. To the elder he confided as much as he ever could confide in anybody; of the younger he was now and then a little afraid, because he could not always understand her. Since their mother's death they had had no other companion and guide; and he had done his best to supply the place of a mother to them. He knew everything about their dressing; he bought most of their clothes for them; he was as good as a lady's maid or a milliner. Therefore he sat down gravely now, and entered into elaborate consultation with Miss Alicia herself as to the dress she was to wear, and the best combination of colours in ribbons, ornaments, and so forth. Both his children were very fond of him, but the elder never displeased him. He suited her admirably under the circumstances, and she would not have had him other than he was. The younger sometimes broke into petulance when she found him volunteering to go into counsel on the pattern of a dress or a slipper, or when he brought guests to dine with him, who, as she was pleased to think, despised him.

Having arranged his elder daughter's dinner-dress, Mr. Aspar left her room, and was rushed against and almost overturned by the impetuous advance of the younger girl.

"Dear papa, must I dine with you to-day? Must I meet this Mr. Tyrone?"

"I should like you to do so, my love. That would be my wish, certainly."

"Does he talk with a brogue? Does he say och, sure, and bedad? Does he sing comic songs? I hate comic songs."

"Mr. Tyrone, my love, is a perfect gentleman, and was brought up, I am told, in France."

"But isn't he a tremendous swell, and won't he despise us? When's his wife coming to call on Alicia and me, I should like to know?"

"He hasn't any wife, darling, and I hope he's too much the gentleman to despise two handsome young ladies because their father isn't——I mean, is in business. Besides, I hope to be of great service to him, very great service indeed."

Mr. Aspar rubbed his hands gently, and looked at his daughter timidly, with his head a little on one side. He was undoubtedly rather afraid of the girl whom he had himself spoiled, and she knew it quite well, and tantalized him just for a moment, enjoying her power, like a genuine woman, and then relented. She noticed, too, that his cheek looked a little pale, and that his lips seemed colourless. She put her arms round his neck and kissed him.

"Oh, you darling, good, kind, kind papa! I know how you make a slave of yourself for us, two good-for-nothing, lazy girls! Yes, you do, and try to conciliate people, and get their business—I suppose their patronage—for us. And I have the heart to be angry for this! You look paler, too; what have you been doing with yourself? I wish you would set us to work at something. I am ever so much stronger than you, and I could understand all about figures. Can't I do anything?"

"You can dress yourself nicely, my dear, and look your best at dinner."

"Then so I will; and behave my best, my very best, too."

"And I want you to glance over the book I gave to Alicia, dear. It's all about Mr. Tyrone's family. I should like you to know something that you could say to him or allude to——"

"What dreadful hypocrisy! How I do wish you were a judge, or a bishop, or something of the kind, so that you never need think about conciliating this person or that. No matter. I'll try to read all about Brian Boru and Malachi, and the rest of it. Does our distinguished guest wear a collar of gold, papa; and I wonder would he give it to me if I were to be very flattering, and put in a quiet hint?"

Mr. Aspar laughed easily. He thought he was now tolerably certain of his younger daughter's good humour. She, for her part, got the book which told of the fortunes of the Tyrone family, and she was, in spite of herself, soon absorbed in it. The book was a shabby little volume bound in faded blue calico, and printed, apparently with dust, upon tea paper. It was a reproduction of some collection of family records, with a few chapters added to bring it down to modern times,

and it bore date twenty years back. Beginning, as might be expected, at the end, Jennie learned that a Tyrone, whom she presumed to be the father of the expected guest, was killed in a duel in France; that his father, a general in the Grand Army, was killed at Leipzig; that an earlier Tyrone charged at Fontenoy; an earlier still fought under Sarsfield; and so they went back to the days of rebellions against Elizabeth and struggles against the Henries. She read with wonder and a kind of fascination the story of a race as strange to all her ideas as that of the Ottoman Turks, or the Red Indians, yet always blending with English chronicles and the fortunes of Englishmen. It was the story of a race bold, brilliant, intractable, and now ruined; a story of perpetual resistance, a battle and a march, a fierce romance, a blood-stained epic of futile bravery and unbroken pride.

She read so long that at last the evening found her reading still; and she heard the quick rattle of a hansom below, and her sister came in and begged her to be quick with her dressing, for the guest had actually arrived, and was already in the drawing-room.

## CHAPTER II.

Mr. Maurice Fitzhugh Tyrone, M.P., was rather a disappointing person to look at—disappointing at least to a somewhat romantic young woman who had been reading a wild family history. He was in some sense, too, a disappointment to the elder sister as well as to the younger, for the former had read scathing denunciations of him in the London papers, which represented him as a sort of parliamentary firebrand. Mr. Aspar always wished his daughters to read the papers, or at least to glance at them, and observe what they discussed, so that the girls might be able to hold in conversation the proper part of English ladies. Therefore the young women seldom failed to glance at their *Times*, *Daily News*, *Standard*, or *Telegraph* every morning; their *Saturday Review* and *Spectator* every week. They knew of Maurice Tyrone as they knew of the Pope and Count von Bismarck; a being whom it was then the right sort of thing for all respectable London papers to condemn or to ridicule. They had at one time an idea that Mr. Tyrone was always hurling rebellious denunciations at the head of the Speaker

and that perhaps the country would be all the better if Mr. Tyrone could be sent to penal servitude. But they came to hear more of him in another way. Mrs. Granger, the Aunt Lucy already mentioned, was the sister of their mother, and she went in for being fashionable, and since the girls came to be known as pretty and clever she was often glad to have them at her house. Round Mrs. Granger's table fashionable scandal was much discoursed, and there the two girls often heard of the wild and brilliant Tyrone; there they learned that although an Irishman and said to be half a rebel, he was a person who mixed in the very worst of the best society; that he was the companion of reckless marquises, and was slow to associate himself with viscounts of new creation. They heard, in short, that he was an eccentric and self-conceited prodigal, whom nothing could cure of pride, dissipation, and Irish nationality.

Now this was undoubtedly a disagreeable person for two respectable middle-class English girls to have to meet. Still it would have been something to see him and to wonder at him. But Mr. Tyrone was in his way a commonplace person. At first he was like almost any other west-end "swell." He was tall, fair, handsome, with languid eyes, and hair parted in the middle. He was fashionably dressed, and almost over-dressed, and there was an odour of perfume about him. His appearance when he dropped his eyelids suggested only languor and hauteur; but when he looked in the face of a listener there was a frankness and an almost boyish sweetness in his blue Celtic eyes which possessed a certain fascination. He spoke with the lightest possible trace of a French accent, explained by his education and residence in France. This little savour of the stranger's tone was the only characteristic which seemed at first to distinguish the formidable Tyrone from any handsome lounger in Rotten Row.

"This is my youngest daughter, Mr. Tyrone," said Mr. Aspar when Jennie came down at last, rather flurried and conscious that she had not dressed herself very well.

Mr. Tyrone bowed, and apparently ignored her. She looked very young, certainly, and almost like a mere schoolgirl, and she knew that men of the world don't care about school-girls. But she felt vexed and offended, and did the rudest thing open to her under the circumstances. She took up a book and began to read.

Mr. Tyrone conversed quietly with her father and sister.

Jennie thought there was an unspeakable air of deference in her father's manner towards his guest; he almost seemed to bow or to cringe, as he rubbed his hands, at every word addressed to him. Jennie's forehead began to grow hot. Hardly less annoyed was she to observe, as she thought, in her sister's manner a certain affectation of grandeur. The tones of Alicia's voice seemed slightly changed to suit the circumstances; and every movement of her white shoulders appeared, the observer thought, as if designed to impress the guest with an idea of easy grandeur and dignified position.

It was, to our pretty little cynic, a trying quarter of an hour until dinner was announced. But the announcement came punctually at the appointed hour—came to the minute. Mr. Tyrone took in Alicia and sat near her. Mr. Aspar was at the other end of the table. His younger daughter sat opposite the guest. The large dining-table on which Jennie had cut her capers had been removed, and a small cosy one, just suited to give ample room to four or five, was put in its place. Nothing could have been more brilliant than the array of the table. It sparkled with silver and cut glass; it blushed and glowed with flowers. It might have been a little family dinner for a couple of emperors and their empresses. Carpenter's mode of serving was noiseless and perfect. The guest evidently liked his dinner. Unluckily, however, Mr. Aspar would make some apologetic remark, as if this were not by any means the sort of thing he would have liked to offer to his guest if he had had time to give orders, and Jennie fancied she saw an expression of contempt somewhere about the eyebrows of Mr. Tyrone.

"Of course he has found us out long ago," she thought. "Of course he sees that we have done our very best."

As if this was not enough, Mr. Aspar even made some remark gently depreciatory of the wine.

"You are not a connoisseur of wine evidently, Mr. Aspar," said Tyrone, coolly. "This is perfection; there's nothing better to be had anywhere."

A harmless, and, indeed, a gratifying remark, surely, yet Jennie felt annoyed.

"I believe you know the Grangers, Mr. Tyrone?" said Alicia, smiling sweetly. "Mrs. Granger, of Denzill Street? I have heard her speak of you."

"I have met Mrs. Granger, I think—I haven't the honour

of knowing her very well. I have had a card for one of her parties, I think, but I was not able to go."

"You don't care for that sort of person, I suppose?" said Jennie, bursting into the conversation for the first time, and feeling her eyes dilate and her cheeks grow red, but determined to brave it out now. "You think her beneath you, I suppose? She's our aunt, but I'm very glad, for she thinks herself very great, and rather looks down upon us."

Alicia looked horrified, Mr. Aspar grew hot, Mr. Tyrone smiled, and looked curiously at the pert pretty girl across the table, and then said with perfect composure—

"I don't care much for crowded parties in the season, and the House takes up one's time very much. Mrs. Granger is well known to many of my friends. If I don't know her better it's my own fault, and now I find my misfortune."

"It's not too late," said Jennie; "it can be remedied. I dare say she will be glad to see you."

"I have always heard her spoken of as extremely kind and hospitable," Mr. Tyrone quietly replied; and he turned to some other subject, leaving Miss Jennie wholly discomfited.

The remainder of the dinner-time was spoiled for Jennie, who began already to reproach herself, and to remember that she was always saying hasty things and then being sorry for them. The worst of it was, that her father and Alicia would never complain and scold her, which made her feel so ungrateful and criminal. This time, too, Mr. Tyrone seemed to make a point of keeping up a lively conversation, and showing particular attention to her. This proved to her humbled sensitiveness that he only looked upon her as a saucy schoolgirl, who, having been rude to a guest, would be sure to be scolded by-and-by, if the guest did not try to cover her fault and protect her. So she was very much relieved when Alicia's signal gave her an opportunity of escape.

Both the gentlemen were probably glad when the young ladies left the room. The moment they had gone Mr. Aspar drew his chair near that of Tyrone, and asked—

"Would you like the lamps lighted?"

"No; thanks. Not just yet. What a lovely evening!"

Tyrone rose from his chair and went to one of the windows, which was open, and looked out for a moment on the lawn and into the violet sky, in which one or two pale, tiny stars were already trembling. The breath of the flowers and the grass floated into the room. It was just the hour when, do

what man will, steep himself in the world's atmosphere as he may, he must acknowledge the influence of regret. Tyrone turned away, and sat down again.

His host waited for him to speak. Something indefinable in Mr. Aspar's manner had changed him into a man of business from a somewhat too deferential entertainer. Tyrone seemed to perceive this, and his own manner too underwent a change, and he dropped rather than plunged, carelessly rather than brusquely, into the middle of business at once.

"Well, Mr. Aspar, what do you think of my condition? Speak out, I shan't be offended. It looks a good deal like what people call ruin, doesn't it?"

"It looks so, Mr. Tyrone, certainly. Oh, yes, it does look so. But I query, sir—permit me—I query, now, if it amounts to that in fact."

Mr. Aspar always said "I query" when he meant to be impressive. He thought it sounded much finer than "I question."

"Show me anything else it amounts to," said Tyrone, speaking impetuously. "Look here, Mr. Aspar, in five years I have spent a fortune, the savings of a long minority; spent it and squandered it like a fool. Heaven or the other place only knows where half of it has gone, and I'd give something to anybody who would show me that any mortal creature has been the better for it. My estates are so swamped with debt that if things don't improve they must come into the Landed Estates Court at last, and be bought up in parcels by some enterprising persons from Aberdeen. It's of no use lamenting all this or preaching sermons over it. I dare say I should do it all over again if I had the chance. The question is, what stands between me and bankruptcy? Can you help me? Lord Neston says you can, if anybody can."

"I had the good fortune, Mr. Tyrone, to help his lordship, or, as I may perhaps express it, tide him over a crisis in his affairs; and now——"

"Yes, he's all right now, I think; thanks to you, he says."

"I am not a money-lender, Mr. Tyrone."

Tyrone raised his eyebrows.

"That is, I do things that other parties—other persons I mean—don't undertake. I look into a gentleman's affairs if he does me the honour to give me his entire confidence. I study them all with the eye, if I may be allowed the expression, of a sincere, although humble friend. If I see that

though they may look badly now, there is elasticity, there is recuperative power in them, sir, then I am willing to constitute myself, as it were, the private banker of the gentleman until things come right. We have no papers or deeds, sir, no more than a confidential line or two. I only feel an interest in the affairs of gentlemen and men of honour."

"Thanks," said Tyrone, carelessly, assuming from Mr. Aspar's manner that some compliment was meant. "I knew all that—otherwise of course——Well, then, what do you think of the condition of things?"

"Shall we first speak of the expectations you partly told me of?"

"No; those last, please. Tell me what you think first without taking these into account."

"I opine, Mr. Tyrone, that there are—if I may employ a form of speech familiar to you as a member of parliament—three courses open to you. Firstly, you could resign your seat; go into the country, try to look after your property, and live economically."

"Yes. Very good. I'll not do that. I'll not give up the House, I like it; I like the excitement and everything about it. And besides, Mr. Aspar—you'll hardly understand perhaps, but to be member for my county, pauper and ruined spendthrift that I am, seems the last thing left of my family's position. No, I am still a sort of chief, while I can talk up for my people in the House; you may laugh at this if you like, but I pledged myself to enter on this business with full confidence in you; and I mean to keep my word. It soothes my vanity, Mr. Aspar, to be still the spokesman of some of those grievances and sentiments and all that, that seem such nonsense to you. When the newspapers here pitch into me, well, I—I'm rather pleased at it. That's the truth of the matter. I fancy myself still the head of a grand old Irish house. You think me an idiot? Well, so do I! Anyhow, let us come to the second course. I'll not resign my seat."

"Secondly, you might easily get some appointment from the Government, now that the Liberals have it all their own way. You have done some service for the Radicals, Mr. Tyrone." Mr. Aspar did not go much into politics, but he was not fond of the Radicals.

"I have thought of that, I'm ashamed to say; I have thought of everything. But it wont do. What could they give me? a colonial governorship, to vegetate in some dismal

island? No, I couldn't live out of London or Paris. Besides, Mr. Aspar, I should utterly forfeit my position as Irish Chief," and Tyrone smiled rather a forced smile, "if I were to become an official of the Saxon Government. No, that wont do. I would rather resign than that, and go to America and turn backwoodsman. I have sometimes thought of doing that, changing my name of course. But I can't—*Je m'appelle Camors.*"

"Exactly," said Mr. Aspar, softly, and having no idea whatever of the meaning of the allusion conveyed in the last words, and, indeed, beginning to think that he had to deal with an overgrown baby. "Exactly, of course—quite so. Then the third course, but I crave pardon—you will not be offended?"

"I don't expect to be offended, Mr. Aspar, and I came here to speak and listen freely. Yes, your third course?"

"Well then, Mr. Tyrone, surely you, with your station and gifts and advantages, might very easily marry a fortune."

Tyrone laughed and put his hands in his pockets. "I have thought of that too, Mr. Aspar! I am really almost ashamed to confess it; but I have thought of even that. I might perhaps have done it, but I don't think I could screw myself up to the requisite amount of meanness. I am not much of a marrying man, I suppose, in any case—and I don't think I ought to inflict the curse of my worthless and weak companionship on any woman."

"Marriage is a safeguard," Mr. Aspar gravely began——

"I confess I doubt my own right to ask any woman to victimize herself in order that she might possibly be a safeguard to me. On the whole, I think it would be more honourable to cheat her out of her fortune at cards, or to rob her on the highway, Mr. Aspar; that at least would be only taking her money, not her life. Besides, Providence has decreed—as if to strip me of the credit of even once having made an unselfish resolution, and kept it—that marriage just now would be the forfeit of my Great Expectations."

"Indeed? You do astonish me! May I ask——"

"Of course I am going to tell you. We come to the great expectations, Mr. Aspar; there was once a member of the family of Tyrone who, being poor and having spirit, brains, and honesty, went out to the United States and disgraced himself."

"Truly, sir? I am grieved."

"Are you? Wait a moment. He disgraced himself in the eyes of a tribe of proud and shiftless idlers—like myself, Mr. Aspar—by going into hard-working, honourable business, and making a fortune. Of course we despised him. I was a child in France, and didn't know anything about him; but no doubt I should have shared the family scorn for his debasement. But he died; and there's his money! Your proud people don't despise that, Mr. Aspar, do they?"

"I presume not, Mr. Tyrone. It is one of the failings of humanity."

"So it is. Well, this dishonour to his name married in America too young a wife, who turned out badly—never mind. He had one son, who it seems turned out badly too. I don't know how; never cared to ask, being too busily engaged in turning out badly myself. The poor man—I mean the rich man—had some affection for the family name, I don't know why; and he knew how fast it was being run into the ground. He left all his money for the express purpose of restoring the dignity of the house which had scorned him—to *me*."

"To you, Mr. Tyrone, a fortune, indeed?"

"Over a hundred thousand pounds, with interest, since accumulating, for that was years ago."

"Then may I ask what's your difficulty?"

"There are conditions, Mr. Aspar!"

"Ah!" Mr. Aspar looked blank. He had not much faith in his client's capacity for fulfilling any difficult conditions, or any conditions which did not jump with his own humour.

"First and foremost, I am not to marry before the age of forty. My unknown relative had a wholesome horror of early marriages, you will see. Next, as he had a detestation of certain wild ways which prevailed in Ireland during his time, I am never during the same period to take part in a duel either as principal or second."

"*That* wont be a difficult condition," said Mr. Aspar, "even for——"

"Even for an Irishman? No, not now. That sort of thing is out of fashion in London at least. But how about Paris? However, that condition doesn't trouble me. I could manage well enough for *that*. Perhaps the third and last is easier still. My unseen benefactor had a just contempt for the miserable little insurrections which foolish people get up in Ireland; and he made it a third condition that his

heir presumptive must never be engaged in any plot against the power of Queen Victoria."

"Are these all the conditions, Mr. Tyrone?"

"These are all."

"Well now, surely, nothing can be easier than these, except perhaps the first one. Unmarried until forty? Yes—now, I query whether a man does well, Mr. Tyrone, by marrying before he has attained that age. But now suppose you should happen to marry, or——"

"Or to fight a duel, or become a Fenian Head Centre? The money goes at once to some American relative of the old man's. I don't know anything about him; and if he dies before my time of probation is out, and I fail, then and only then it goes to the prodigal son, who was cut off, or to his wife or her heirs, if she has any. That is the story put into a few words; and now tell me what you think of my Great Expectations?"

"Really, Mr. Tyrone, the whole thing seems so strange, and like something in a story, that really now I do find it difficult to attempt giving an off-hand opinion. One might think it over, of course. You refer, sir, no doubt, to the possibility of obtaining, so to speak, sir, advances on the strength of this will?"

"Precisely."

"Exactly, of course, quite so, yes—y-es! The difficulty, you see, is this; there is so little to go on, Mr. Tyrone! If you were to die in the meantime—pardon me for the suggestion, Mr. Tyrone, you don't look like death, sir, but it will come to us all—come to us all, sir, and even the young—well, it is only this, that if you should die within the time, and even without having broken any of the conditions, I query, sir, whether your heirs could claim the money. Of course I only speak off-hand, not having seen the document, and not being a lawyer; but I query that, sir."

"I should say my heirs, if I had any, certainly could not claim a penny," said Tyrone. "The will speaks of conditions to be fulfilled. If I were to die I could not fulfil them; that seems the plain sense of the matter. But, Mr. Aspar, I must tell you something else. I feel driven just now to do almost anything; but there are times when this whole thing seems unspeakably mean and detestable. Why should I degrade myself by fashioning my life in any way to suit the whims of an old man whom I never knew? Why should I hunt after

the money that ought to belong to the old fellow's son? How do I know but that the son may be a manly and honest fellow himself? Suppose he has a wife and a colony of children, which may be taken as almost certain? How they must hate me—and I don't like to be hated; what a mean cad they must think me! Some time or other while the years were crawling on, and I was working out my conditions, this sort of thought would perhaps come into my head and drive me to break any conditions, and do anything rather than touch such money as *that*."

Tyrone suddenly stopped in his stream of talk as the sound of a harp, with some wild and plaintive air, floated into the room.

"The music disturbs you, perhaps? My daughters play a good deal; but just now—I'll go and stop it." Mr. Aspar rose hastily.

"No, no, I only stopped to listen; that's exquisitely played. I know the air too."

Mr. Aspar was about to speak when his guest waved his hand rather imperiously to order silence. The harp went on, and Tyrone bending forward from his chair, towards the direction whence the sound came, sat and listened. When the harp ceased, after a few thrilling vibrations, he sat as if he were still listening for a few seconds, then he rose hastily and went to the window and looked out.

"I am no musician," he said abruptly, "but that sort of thing affects me, I don't know why."

"It *was* rather dismal," his host said, apologetically.

Tyrone looked round quickly, half puzzled, half contemptuous, but said nothing.

"Shall we resume our conversation?" Mr. Aspar mildly suggested.

"Not now, Mr. Aspar, thank you; it seems a sort of sacrilege to talk of money and parchments in this delicious twilight and after that music. Can't we finish our talk by-and-by?"

"Of course, as you please, Mr. Tyrone, only I thought it might be better——"

"There is no better or worse about it."

"Then will you come into the drawing-room?"

Tyrone assented, and they went. The drawing-room looked very pretty now that the soft light of the lamps gleamed there, and subdued the too great newness and

brightness of the furniture and the ornaments, which gave the room in open day a little too much of the appearance of a baby-house just bought and brought home. The harp, on which Tyrone's eyes turned the moment he came in, stood silent now in one corner. The elder sister was seated at a grand piano. The younger was coiled up on a sofa in a dim part of the room, out of which her shining eyes met Tyrone's. She remained defiantly just as she was for a moment; but when he had approached her sister she rose and arranged herself in a more seemly attitude. She generally did the right thing, but always liked to do it as if it were because she chose, and not merely because it was right. While coiled up on the sofa she had been weaving odd fancies to herself about dark streams far away, flowing under high rocks with castles on them, and moonlight trying to break out of the heavy clouds, and dim ghosts wandering round—all as in Ossian. The handsome young man with the hair parted in the middle dispelled those dreams, and she was glad that he took no notice of her, but went over to her sister.

Miss Alicia seemed to have been urged by Mr. Tyrone to play for him, and she performed some marvellous classic pieces, stately and grand. But Tyrone was no musician; and high art is oppressive sometimes to ordinary minds, and one cannot get much soul out of a piano anyhow. He thanked her politely, commended in set terms, and was very glad when the performance was over. Miss Aspar turned her large, quiet eyes up to his, and then dropped her eyelids, and accepted his compliments with a sweet gratitude. She knew that she played well, and she had little perception of anybody's feelings save her own. So she really believed that he was delighted.

A servant entered with some message for Mr. Aspar, who left the room.

"You play the harp," said Tyrone. "We heard you when we were in the dining-room. Will you not favour us now?"

"Oh, no; I don't play the harp, or very indifferently, and I don't care to display my want of proficiency. But my sister plays it; it was she you must have heard. I was in the garden."

The elder sister was really glad to give her junior a chance of displaying her one accomplishment. Miss Alicia was perfectly good-natured and complacent, and never was out of humour or sullen in her life.

"Jennie, dearest, Mr. Tyrone, I am sure, would like to hear you play the harp."

Something in Mr. Tyrone's expression piqued the younger girl. She thought he looked surprised. "He takes me for a little saucy school-girl," she said to herself, "and thinks I ought to have a penny whistle." She took her seat near the harp, and drew the instrument towards her.

"Is there anything you would wish me to play?" she asked, coldly. For she said in her own mind, "It is part of our business, I suppose, to amuse this gentleman the best we can, but I don't care whether he sees or not that I only do my share as a business."

"The piece I heard you play a few moments ago. It's an Irish air, I am sure?"

"I don't know; I found it somewhere."

She stretched her arms across the thrilling wires, and played an air wild, sweet, and melancholy as the sound of the surges on some lonely northern coast in the twilight of early autumn. It floated suddenly from high to low, like the breeze or like a seabird. It was hardly made for singing. Few voices could sweep from its heights to its sudden falls without harshness and strain. Miss Alicia thought it barbarous, and was a little ashamed of the odd performance. Mr. Tyrone listened with such evident delight in his eyes, and in the movement, silently striving to keep time, of his nervous fingers, that to see him became part of the delight Jennie felt in her own playing, and she and he grew sympathetic in the music.

"You admire that; you really admire and enjoy *that?*" he asked, eagerly, before the last notes had died away, and without uttering one word of commendation.

"Oh, yes, indeed I do!"

"I saw it in your eyes."

"But are you surprised?"

"Well, yes, I am surprised, because it is only an old Irish lament, with hardly any music in it, I think, which an English ear would be likely to appreciate. It carries my senses away. I see all manner of old scenes and places that I have not looked on for years, and I feel like a boy again, as I felt when I was first brought from France to Ireland, and they wakened me up early one grey morning, and I saw that our vessel was sailing by a steep rocky coast, with a ruined castle on the heights. I saw all Ireland in that. I see it now again!"

"When I played it just now," Jennie said, "I thought of Ossian; it was like Ossian. Did you ever read him?"

"Yes, I did. But Ossian, you know, is——"

"All nonsense, I suppose, and stuff. So I have been told. But it seems wonderfully fine to me, so grand, and dim, and ghostly! I like it, too, because I think it would be so delightfully easy to do that kind of poetry."

Tyrone smiled at her frank simplicity.

"Shall I play it over again for you?" she asked, gently, and looking up at him.

He put his hand upon her arm, and prevented her touching the chords.

"No," he said, quickly; "thank you, not now. I hope to have an opportunity of hearing you play it again, and other things too, but not *that* now—not that, and nothing else. I could not have that first impression disturbed."

"What a singular want of politeness," thought the elder sister. "And they say Irish gentlemen are always so polished!"

"Ah, then you *did* really enjoy it!" said Jennie, looking at him with sparkling eyes. "How glad I am to know it."

He touched her hand involuntarily.

"It was a very sad air," the elder sister remarked, thinking that something ought to be said.

"It was like the cry of a Banshee," Tyrone added. "Do you know what a Banshee is?" He was looking towards Jennie.

"Oh, yes, a ghost of some kind."

"A ghost that clings to some old family, and laments when death or other great misfortune comes to the head of the household."

"Do you believe that?" she asked, quite seriously.

"No, Miss Aspar, not in Surrey, at least; and I suppose the atmosphere even of the greyest abbey in Ireland is too modern now for the poor exploded Banshee. Great Pan is dead, you know."

"I am sorry for it."

"Jennie, dear, what nonsense," her sister remonstrated.

"Is there a Banshee in your family history?"

"Yes," Tyrone replied, carelessly; "we are believed still to retain our Banshee. Everything else that belonged to the family has gone. The ghost and I alone remain."

He rose up, turned away from the harp and the player;

and Mr. Aspar, who was entering the room at that moment, brought honest prose again with him. Coffee was served, and Mr. Aspar then pressed Tyrone to enter the library, and return to the business conversation of the evening. But Tyrone would talk no more business that night, and declared that he had to go back to town immediately. He must return to the House; there would, perhaps, be a division. He was almost peremptory, and the business he had come expressly to arrange was left unfinished.

"You have kept your hansom all the time!" Mr. Aspar observed, with surprise, as he stood at the gate, taking leave of his guest. "What a needless expense, my dear sir. I proposed to send you back in my own——"

"No matter," said Tyrone, carelessly, as he lit a cigar, "it's only going into the *Gazette* a day sooner. Good night."

Mr. Aspar paused for a moment until the hansom had disappeared. Then he entered the house. In the hall he met Carpenter. He took out his watch.

"Five minutes to eleven. There is a train for town at ten minutes past. Are you going by that, Carpenter?"

"If you please, sir."

"Yes; you will reach Westminster before he does. I wish, Carpenter, you would proceed incontinently to Palace Yard, and just wait there and observe if Mr. Tyrone really returns to the House. You can tell me to-morrow; I am curious to know."

## CHAPTER III.

Palace Yard was almost silent when Mr. Tyrone's cab came rattling up there. A division upon an important question was expected, but it was not a subject which greatly interested the public, and there were still some hours of talking to be got through. The pavement had only half-a-dozen loungers, and two or three policemen. The great hall, with the lights at the members' entrance on its left side, and the lights at the upper end, bore an odd resemblance to a gigantic antique tomb, with lamps burning dimly in it. The great glowing face of the clock in the tower overlooking the yard, seemed an unnatural and ugly goblin staring out of the pale sky and the still summer air.

Tyrone leaped out of his cab, a policeman hurrying to assist

him. There was a moment's delay in paying the fare, and Tyrone was entering the hall when a woman, who had been slowly pacing the pavement without, came up with him and laid her hand upon his arm. Tyrone, hardly even glancing at her, was about to continue his way, but she still held to his arm, and spoke his name in a tone so earnest and full of pain that he stopped and looked at her. She was poorly dressed, and had her veil down, so that he could hardly see even her eyes; but she seemed still young, and had somehow the appearance of a lady.

"Do you want anything of me?" he asked quickly, but not ungently. "I am rather pressed for time."

"I do—I do! I want you, for God's sake, to do a kindness, a charity—not to me, but to some one who has a claim on you."

Tyrone was not much surprised at this. He was accustomed to be beset by applications for relief from people who conceived that they had a claim on him. Every broken-down Irishman or woman assumed to have a claim on him. He was accustomed to find stout compatriots leaning their shoulders against the lamp-post near his lodgings, waiting for him to come out in the morning. He often, as he went to put his latchkey into the door at night, saw a figure emerge into light from the porch, and found that a claimant for his charity had been waiting for him. Tyrone gave when he could, gave very often when he ought not to have given, and when the money could not justly be called his own. He liked to give, it hurt him to refuse, which of late he often had to do. All the time, he knew perfectly well that there was no charity or virtue in that sort of giving, that it was partly indolence, and partly vanity, and partly a kind of pagan generosity, but he could not help it, or said to himself that he could not.

"What do you want," he said, "and what's your claim on me? Do be quick, please."

His resources really were so limited that he tried, in mere self-defence, to be a little harsh, and show cause against this application.

"*I* have no claim on you—if it were only my misery you should never be troubled. He *has* a claim, and he's dying for want of proper food."

"Who's dying?"

"I can't tell you his name."

"Well, really, then——"

"But he has a claim on you. You mustn't let him die—you shan't let him die!"

"Can you tell me nothing about him? Do I know him?"

"You never saw him, perhaps, but he has a claim on you. Do you think I am deceiving you? Look at me."

She threw back her veil, and Tyrone could see a dark, wasted, pallid face, still symmetrical, and almost beautiful in outline, with eager and burning eyes, and lips that quivered and trembled with agony of excitement. Imposture never looked like that. Tyrone put his hand into his pocket.

"Will you come and see him?" she pleaded. "Oh, come and look at him."

"Is it far away?"

"No, not far. Will you pay for a cab?"

Tyrone glanced involuntarily around. For a young member of parliament to get into a hansom with an unknown woman at midnight in Palace Yard, is not quite a common sort of proceeding. The woman observed his hesitation and understood it.

"You are afraid," she said, "of what people may say! I look, perhaps, like a disreputable person—a wicked woman! Wicked enough I am in one sense, but not in that. Very like a lady of pleasure I look, don't I? Man, I am only imploring you to do a good action—one that Heaven will be glad of. Are you always as careful of your reputation when you are in worse company? What is your repute here already?"

Mr. Tyrone looked at his watch. "I shall be back in time," he thought, "wherever this expedition leads to. I believe this woman is sincere. I will go, let what will be said."

He beckoned to a hansom, and handed the woman in as calmly and politely as if she had been a lady of rank whom he was conducting to her carriage. He then got in beside her. Before he had taken his seat, however, she had opened the little window in the roof, and given the driver a direction.

The cab drove off; and Carpenter, Mr. Aspar's quiet emissary, emerged from the station he had taken up in shadow, near the entrance of the hall. He had seen all, and heard nothing; and he had only to report what he had seen to his employer.

Mr. Tyrone and his companion drove over Westminster

Bridge, southward. They were silent for a while. Tyrone could feel that the woman trembled and shivered beside him.

"Are you cold?" he asked in surprise, for the summer air was still aglow.

"I don't know—I'm nervous—I'm wretched."

"Is this man your husband?"

"Are you afraid that our relationship isn't quite sanctified by the church and the law? Is Mr. Tyrone so virtuous and proper?" She spoke in a tone of scornful levity that jarred upon the ears of her companion.

"I only asked you a plain question," Tyrone answered, almost sternly. "Is this man your husband, your brother, or your father?"

"For his misfortune," she answered, quickly, "and the great good fortune of others, he is my husband. Have no fear about that! We are man and wife."

"Is he very sick?"

"He is wasting away; he is dying for want of nourishment—he is in some sort of low condition and wandering in his mind, and I have nothing to give him."

"Have you nothing in the house?"

"Nothing, now."

"Then, hadn't we better get something? What good is my going with you, otherwise? I am no doctor; and even if I were——"

"True, my God! Look here—will you buy a bottle of wine, that's all you can get here at this hour?"

Tyrone stopped the cab opposite a large public-house, which was still aflame with lights. Hastily bidding the woman remain where she was he went in. The appearance of a "swell" in evening dress created a sort of little sensation among the groups still remaining in the public-house, the dregs of a night's revelry. A man with a harp, and another with a fiddle, were playing a duet, terribly out of tune. A beery man was laying down the law on strikes and trade unions. A tipsy young fellow was "chaffing" two women. Tyrone made his way to the bar and asked for a bottle of champagne and a bottle of port. The barman was handing him down two bottles from the shelves, when Tyrone told him in a low tone that he wanted the wine for a sick, or perhaps a dying, person; that he was willing to pay the price, but begged to have good wine. The barman thereupon went down to a cellar, and brought him out two

bottles which he assured him were "real good stuff." Tyrone bought also a few soft biscuits that were in a glass on the counter. Accustomed to west-end prices, he was not a little astonished to find that he received a great many shillings in change out of a sovereign.

He went back to the cab, and found the woman straining her eyes in wild anxiety.

"I thought you were never coming," she said, pettishly. Tyrone looked at her in surprise, for her tone and manner seemed those of a woman accustomed to expect and exact attention, rather than those of a poor outcast and pauper, pleading for charity to sustain a life dear to her.

The cab drove on directly southwards, until it came to a great open piece of ground. Then it turned to the left along a broad road, then into a narrower street, then into another yet narrower. At last it reached the opening of a little raw unfinished street, a *cul de sac*, with a row of small houses, inhabitable on the one side, and a row in process of erection on the other. The little street was a mere swamp of mud and brick heaps, mortar, rags, broken crockery, and shattered bottles. The cab rocked and jolted, laboured and strained, in going down as if it were stumbling through a freshly-ploughed field.

"Here!" cried the woman, jumping up in the cab, and pushing open the little window, "on your right, where the light is! At last! at last!"

She scrambled past Tyrone, and leaped out. He followed. She opened the door with a big key, and silently beckoned him on. She opened another door; and Tyrone entering saw a miserable room, almost absolutely bare of furniture. One candle burned there. On the floor was a heap of bed-clothes, and seated beside the bed-clothes was a little girl. A faint moaning was heard from among the clothes; and Tyrone saw the pallid face of a man.

The little girl kept her place of watcher, and only whispered in an undertone, "Oh, mamma, I'm so glad you have come."

"How has he been, darling?"

"Only the same."

Tyrone drew near, and looked down upon the pale face of the sick man.

"Is it fever?" he asked.

"No, no, not what people call fever. Excitement, agony of mind, hunger, delirium."

Tyrone could think of nothing better to give him than champagne.

"Have you a glass?" he asked softly.

"No—only a cup." She handed him a cracked old tea-cup.

He thought it useless to ask for a corkscrew; but, with the aid of a penknife, the blades of which he recklessly smashed, he uncorked the champagne bottle. The little girl started when it bubbled, fizzed, and splashed. He bade the woman make the sick man drink a cupful, and apparently the patient drank it with relish. Of his own motion Tyrone ventured then to give some to the little girl, whom its bubbles nearly stifled at first; and he made her have some of the soft sweet biscuits. Then he contrived to uncork the bottle of port too; and put it on the chimney-piece, the only available shelf or stand.

"Has no doctor been to see him?" Tyrone asked.

"No; and none shall! He hates doctors, and so do I. He wants no doctor. He wants food and quiet."

While she stooped over the sick man, Tyrone tried to talk in whispers with the little child. She seemed a pretty creature, for all her pallor and her wasted face, and the heart of the impetuous and careless young man was touched by her. Suddenly he heard the sick man murmur, "Tyrone, Tyrone; the old name—the old name."

"Does he know me?" Tyrone whispered.

"He never saw you."

"But he knows my name?"

"I suppose all his people know your name. It used to be of some power, I believe, long ago, before *you* had it."

"True enough," Tyrone said.

The woman, who was still appealing for his charity, seemed always as if she meant to express a certain dislike and scorn for him. His heedless good-nature and generosity made little account of this.

The sleeper, if his condition could be called sleep, kept on murmuring the names of people and places. He babbled of the Palisades and the North River, and the Bloomingdale Road.

"What places are these?" Tyrone asked, thinking he had heard the names before, but not remembering how or where.

"Places far off, in another city," she said, kneeling down beside the man, and trying to raise his head a little with her

arm. Tyrone forbore to question her any further on the subject, for she evidently desired to give him no information. He drew the little girl towards him again, and tried to talk with her; and he was struck with the delicate outlines of her face, and with the terribly wistful look in her eyes. There is a thoughtless kind of generosity, which is always most easily touched by the obvious and superficial sufferings of childhood. Tyrone took a sovereign from his purse and gave it to the little girl. Her eyes brightened, and she was hurrying to show it to her mother, but Tyrone restrained her. The woman now turned from the bed with a profound sigh.

"I fear," said Tyrone, gently, "that your husband is in fever. Let me urge you to have him removed to the nearest hospital."

"He's not in fever," she replied, vehemently. "Don't talk of it; I know better. He shan't be taken from me, he shan't go to any hospital. There are only the two of us in all the world."

"But there is danger, you know. Your little girl here; there's danger for her."

"I knew what you were going to say," the woman replied, with a kind of passionate wail. "I knew it. But there *isn't* danger, and I can take care of her, and she's not to me what he is! Talk of children! He's more dear to me than all the children on earth! What do *you* know of love? people don't learn that in clubs and smoking-rooms. Look at *him*. I ruined him—for the next world as well as this, I suppose—and he ruined me. Don't talk to me of the love of your happy people! There is no love on earth like that of a man and woman who have destroyed each other for love. And we are such a pair. If he dies he shall die with me! There, I am talking like a fool! What do you know of all this?"

She stood up in an attitude of enforced calmness, and patted her little girl on the head with a grandly protecting air, as though she had been a queen. Tyrone was greatly embarrassed. He saw that he could be of no further use, and would now gladly have escaped.

"If I can do anything for you," he said, "I shall be always ready, and I am easily found. I can only now offer you a little help. Your husband, I suppose, is a countryman of mine. I don't want to ask any of your secrets, but I can guess that much, and he may, perhaps, in brighter days, have known some of my family, although not myself. You

know where to find me, and seem to know something of me. You can't but know that I am the poorest, as well as the last, of my house. All that I now have with me I ask you to accept."

Something there was which made him feel a reluctance to put money into her hand. He took out all his purse contained—literally all—and put it on the chimney-piece, close to where the one sordid candle flickered. It was not much; two sovereigns and a handful of shillings.

The woman glanced at the money, then suddenly caught Tyrone's hand and pressed it to her lips.

"If I can do anything more," he began, "to-morrow, or if you would like me to come again——"

"No," she said, gently—speaking gently for the first time—"I don't ask anything more of you except this, that if by any chance you should ever see him after he recovers—oh! he will recover soon, very soon!—if you should see him anywhere—any time—don't recognise him, don't speak of *this*. He is very proud. Even I shouldn't dare to tell him what I have done to-night, though it was done to save his life."

"I should never know him again."

"Or me with him. If you should see me, promise that you will say nothing?"

"Of course. I give you my word."

"I thank you." She had now taken the candle in her hand to light him to the door. He saw that the hand was white, still white, and small. She followed his glance quickly as a flash, and guessed its meaning. "Yes," she said, with a wild, wan smile, "I was a lady once. I am a ruined lady as surely as you, Tyrone, are a ruined gentleman! But you may retrieve yourself; I never can. If *he* lives I don't care for anything else. You have helped him, and I beg of God to bless you."

"Shall I come again to ask for him?"

"No; oh, no. If I am driven again to utter despair, I will find you out, not otherwise. One word more. On your honour as a gentleman you do not believe me a mere common beggar?"

"On my honour as a ruined gentleman," he said, with some bitterness, "I do not."

"Thank you again! I expected as much. Good night and may God make it a good night to you."

She turned back into the house. Tyrone entered the cab,

nd drove away. When he reached the House of Commons he found, to his great vexation, that the debate had unexpectedly run dry, and that the division was over. He felt sure that the absence of his name from the division list would not escape notice. He also found, when he took out his purse, that he had not left himself money enough to pay for his cab. The man knew him, however, and would see him any day, so the want of money was of little consequence in that case. But Tyrone was in a mood of mind to be annoyed by trifles, and this annoyed him. He asked a question or two of a policeman at one of the inner doors, and found that the House would probably be "up" in a few minutes. It was not worth his while to take the trouble of going in.

Tyrone turned slowly out of Palace Yard. He felt uncertain where to go. His mood was unusually irritable, impatient, and perplexed. Many things had combined that evening to bring home to him a keen sense of his past folly and present degradation. The mere exposition of his affairs to Mr. Joseph Aspar, whom, in his heart, he felt inclined to despise as at once servile and purse-proud, had been a trial of temper and an evidence of humiliation. He was a little ashamed—he could not tell why—of the sort of momentary emotion he had betrayed when the money-lender's daughter played the old Irish air on the harp. He was annoyed that such an absurd outburst of feeling should have prevented him from bringing to any conclusion the disagreeable business he had sacrificed a whole evening to finish. Many of the words and allusions of the woman who had captured him in Palace Yard offended and galled him. He had no doubt that the sick man was, or once had been, some friend or dependant of the Tyrone family; and her words showed him only too plainly that he was himself regarded with reproach and contempt, as a broken-down and ruined prodigal. He was vexed that he should have been absent from the division, because he knew that his party expected some attention and fidelity, and he was conscious that they were beginning to complain of him. Finally, though he was incapable of feeling even a moment's regret for a kindly action, cost what it might, he was nevertheless vexed that he had no money left in his purse.

Thus, vexed with a variety of vexations, he turned irresolutely away. It was not yet one o'clock, and he had not counted on being in bed before four—before bright day. He did not care to go home just now. The night would seem to

have been utterly wasted if he went home now. A lover of pleasure feels terribly wronged by fate if he has to do without pleasure, even though he be in no mood to enjoy it.

No, he would not go home just then. There was a drawing-room where he knew he was even still expected and looked for. Thither he went, rather listlessly and mechanically, not much caring to go, and more thoughtful than usual.

The cottage on the Surrey heath had meanwhile one restless and almost sleepless inmate. Mr. Aspar's youngest daughter could not understand what had befallen her. Her head was light; her heart had a strange aching heaviness in it. She seemed to herself wild, and dizzy, and dreamy. She avoided her sister, and buried herself in her own room, and was supposed to have been out of temper with something, and therefore was charitably left to herself. For it must be owned that she sometimes had her little fits of anger, and that the gentler Alicia did not much care to encounter her in such moments.

But now she was not out of temper; and looking back upon yesterday and the day before, and all the yesterdays, she hardly knew herself, or comprehended how such little things could vex and anger her. Was she then really only a child yesterday, and was she now a woman, and does a child change into a woman that way, all suddenly, in an hour, in a flash?

What was the matter with her? She could not read, nor think; she was only possessed by a vague restless, sightless craving, and sad longing. Sad it was unquestionably, and yet there was, too, a strange sense of ecstasy about it, for when once or twice she thought of the possibility of being restored to her condition of yesterday, the thought was terrible as that of some profound irreparable loss. Something she seemed to have acquired which now, though it pained her, she could not lose without such a struggle as that which dismisses life itself. Every new emotion sprung of the successive seasons of life is born in pain as man is; but birth is a triumph, a new possession, and a glory none the less.

Jennie Aspar was not naturally a vain and self-conceited girl. Yet to-night, before she began undressing, she sat for a long time in front of the looking-glass and gazed at her face in the mirror, and studied it, and wondered if it had any beauty in it, and hoped—oh, hoped so fondly and with such a sickening sense of doubt and distrust!—that she was not without a charm. She tortured herself with thinking how

she had looked all the night; and whether some other dress might not have become her better, and whether more ornaments or less ornaments would have improved her. She allowed her hair to fall this way and that way round her shoulders—she enacted, almost without knowing it, countless follies of which, at another time, she would have been ashamed. She stood at the window and looked out upon the trees, and the sky, and the stars, as women and men have done in their youth, since ever youth was, and stars seemed sympathetic. Then she felt a momentary revival of pride and shame, and grew angry with herself, and tried to hide from herself by covering her face with her hands; and found that, thus screened, she saw herself only all the clearer. She hastened into bed, and tossed and tumbled there and could not sleep, and knew not how it was with her.

She began to think how, formerly, when some sudden illness or pain had come to her in the night, she had arisen and gone into her sister's room, and been soothed and petted by Alicia. Now she shrank from the very thought of any such companionship with a kind of shudder: and the clasp of her sister's arms would have been unendurable. At last, perhaps in pity, and to save her from a night of utter unrest, there came on her thoughts of her father's position and occupations: of his servile ways, of their obscurity, and of a certain atmosphere of meanness encompassing their lives, despite of their money and luxury—and a miserable despair seized her and forced her passion to relieve itself in tears, and she cried herself to sleep.

The morning came, in sunlight, streaming through green leaves, and Jennie awoke with a vague sweet sense of new joy and possession. For the first moment or two it was all joy and sweetness, as if she had had some gift of immortality or other wonderful endowment conferred upon her, of which the world around knew nothing yet. Even when the realities of things came in upon her, and she heard the voice of her father and of her sister, and of the servants, and knew that she had slept rather late, and knew that she had now to dress and get up to breakfast and a prosaic world, she was yet conscious of a certain gladness and pride. The world was not the same to her this morning that it showed itself at the same time yesterday. It was transfigured. She had entered upon a new existence. The first grand exulting epoch in a woman's life had come upon her—she had found a hero.

There was a dainty little volume, bound in crimson morocco,

that lay with others on Jennie Aspar's dressing table. It was a volume made up of selections from the early English poets; a passage from Shakspeare, a description from Spenser, a profound couplet of humour and wisdom from Chaucer, and so forth—an anthology deemed by Mr. Aspar specially suitable and safe for girls, that they might know some of the best things from poets of whom it would not be right that educated Englishwomen should know absolutely nothing, but whose full pages Englishwomen were not properly to be allowed to explore. Jennie Aspar as she dressed opened the volume listlessly, and her eyes fell upon one "mighty line" by Marlowe:

"Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

The line flamed in her eyes like fire. She read her own soul in its light. Her cheek grew suddenly red; she put the book hurriedly down. Yet in her heart she felt proud, as one who has heard the voice of an oracle.

She came down to breakfast in a gladsome and *exaltée* sort of condition. There was a strange sense of pride in her which banished all petty ill-humours, and made her feel very tender and considerate to her father and her sister. She thought Alicia was looking very beautiful, and she said so. She kissed her father with special warmth. Mr. Aspar was in a terribly moralizing mood, to her great surprise. He preached quite a sermon on extravagance, pride, and want of principle. This had special reference to their guest of the previous evening, as she soon found. Mr. Aspar used long, solemn and eloquent words to describe Tyrone's pride, his arrogance, his prodigality of the past and his poverty of the present. He darkly hinted at yet graver offences, but only very darkly. Jennie grew so red that she did not venture to look up until the lecture was nearly finished; then she could restrain herself no longer.

"Did you learn all this since last night, papa?"

"No, my love—that is not all. I certainly have had some confirmation even this morning. Some confirmation—ah yes, indeed" (he had already seen Carpenter),—"very sad. Pride and poverty!"

"Especially poverty!" said Jennie, with scornful eyes.

"Especially poverty, of course, my love! that is, when coupled with morals of which one cannot approve. Honest poverty is very different."

"Is he ever coming here again?"

"Who, my dear?"

"I thought we were only speaking of him—of Mr. Tyrone—papa. Is he ever likely to come any more?"

"It is possible, my dear. I do not say that it may not be possible. In business we have often to meet on friendly terms with persons whose private conduct we cannot admire."

"Yes; but *I* would not, if I were a man, go out of my way to invite such people to my house, and beg of them to come, and make myself humble to them, and put myself under their feet—I would not do it!"

"Men often have to conciliate."

"Then I am glad I am not a man. I could not do it for all the world." And so saying, Jennie left the room rather hastily as if she had forgotten something.

Mr. Aspar had finished his breakfast. He looked at his watch and rose to go.

"I am very glad," he said to his elder daughter, "to hear Jennie express such sentiments. She puts them a little sharply, but they do credit to her moral feelings. I am glad to find that she estimates properly such a young man as Mr. Tyrone."

"I hope she does estimate him properly," Alicia answered, thoughtfully.

"You heard her, Alicia, my love, you heard how warmly she spoke. She positively blamed me for even bringing him here! I am relieved a good deal. *You*, my dear, I need not caution, if Mr. Tyrone should come here again. His prospects are not by any means so good as I fancied; and he can't well marry for fourteen or fifteen years."

Alicia tossed her head slightly, but then said quite good-humouredly—

"There isn't the slightest occasion to be uneasy on my account, papa dear."

"No, my love, I thought not."

"I never thought of him, and I can assure you he never thought about me."

"Quite right, all right, so much the better. I think the gilding of that cornice wants looking to, Alicia; I'll tell Carpenter. That hearthrug too—isn't it fading very much, and so soon? You oughtn't to let the sun come in so much in the mornings. That blind is quite in order, surely?"

The younger daughter had now returned to the room.

Usually her father never expected her to go into these little details about fading carpets and tarnished cornices. It vexed her, in fact, to see him always casting his eyes about the room in minute inspection of every chair and table. She disliked to see him thus converting himself into a housekeeper, and chafed often at the good-humoured and congenial zest with which Alicia would go elaborately into her father's views and considerations on the polishing of a curtain ring, or the negligence of a housemaid. Indeed Mr. Aspar was a man who will not allow a woman of spirit, be she wife or daughter, to hold him in much respect. She may feel affection for him; but she could not respect his undisguised wordliness, his servile ways, his small pride in costly furniture, his small anxieties about its proper preservation. Her father's peculiarities were a trial in general to Jennie Aspar. But this day, for some reason, her heart softened and melted to him, with something like a filial pity and compassion for his very meannesses; with something like a feeling of penitence for her own past impatience; something like a sense that she was even now deceiving him, keeping a secret emotion from him, entering upon a new chapter of life which was to separate their hearts more widely than ever. Jennie Aspar was the better already in soul and spirit for the night that had passed over her head.

## CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Granger, "Aunt Lucy," lived in Denzill Street, leading out of one of the best squares. Mrs. Granger liked her friends to describe her as of Denzill Street. "The Grangers of Denzill Street, you know." The square into which Denzill Street opened was not one of your new crude, Belgravian structures of stucco which rose out of a builder's swamp the day before yesterday, and might be inhabited by any sort of people who had money. Bruton Square was surrounded, or nearly so, by family mansions, in which successive generations had lived. The palace and gardens of a great nobleman occupied nearly one side of it, and presented to the public the view of a blank dead wall, with a grim gate, and tantalizing glimpses of noble trees above it. Many of the houses had still the iron extinguishers outside their doors, where, in the olden days, the torch-bearers put out their flambeaux. Bruton

Square was not specially bright and clear, it was not staring; it was solid, old, and grand. Your new rich man would have found himself out of his element there.

It was a great thing therefore to live in one of the streets opening into Bruton Square. To live in Denzill Street was one of Mrs. Granger's dearest sources of pride. But Denzill Street itself may not apparently be a desirable place to live in. Anywhere out of London it would have been impossible to get people of good position to pay a high rent for a house in such a place. It is doubtful whether any stranger to London could be induced to believe in an unexaggerated picture of the condition of Denzill Street. Yet, the faithful picture is worth studying, if only to see what a respectable Englishwoman will do for fashion.

Denzill Street connects Bruton Square with a great west-end thoroughfare. When you enter Denzill Street you are in a perfect network of fashionable streets. But strangers approaching Denzill Street from the great thoroughfare, not the square, have been known to turn back in disgust, feeling convinced that they must have come to the wrong place. For the opening of the street at that end looks like a bit of St. Giles's. A narrow, crooked neck or gorge it is, with dirty little squalid shops on either side, and it seems to be everywhere covered and domineered by the backs of houses. As he passes on, the visitor is aware of a rag-and-bottle store, a dairy, an establishment which proclaims the sweeping of chimneys and keeping flues in order as its motive, an old-clothes dealer's, a small tailor's, two shabby little bonnet-frame shops, a timber-yard, oddly crammed away among all these dwarf tenements, an undertaker's, a staymaker's, a cobbler's, and the Bruton Arms public-house. Being assured, however, that that positively is Denzill Street, leading to Bruton Square, the stranger takes heart of grace and pushes on. After a while the shops begin slightly to improve in their character. The cobbler is succeeded by a boot and shoemaker; the stays give place to "Madame D'Epinay of Paris, *corsetière*." One or two small jewellers appear, and here and there a tiny private dwelling-house, mean and dingy of complexion. At last Denzill Street becomes almost exclusively made up of private houses, and it empties itself, still narrow and poor, into stately Bruton Square, like some miserable muddy stream trickling into a broad blue lake. For the very best part of Denzill Street is small, starved, and mean.

The private houses, of fading yellow-white fronts, are all given up to portico, dining-room and drawing-room. The halls are narrow; the stairs are diminutive and mean; the bedrooms are hardly the size of a good bath; the servants nearly all sleep off the premises; the carriages are kept in the neighbouring mews. The only thing large about the place is the rent. For one of these shabby stifling little dens of gentility you might have a mansion and grounds at Denmark Hill or Highgate. But then you would not have the pride of living in Denzill Street, Bruton Square.

In one of the smallest of these fashionable residences lived the Grangers. Mrs. Granger never, under any circumstances, approached her house from any but the Bruton Square end. She avoided the rag-and-bottle shops, the cobbler's, the public-house, and the other eyesores of the locality. Her own drawing-room windows looked across, and at small distance, on a blacking-shop, but she could not help that.

Our little Jennie had a quick sense of humour, and a pretty keen appreciation of the ridiculous. She was not considered a very sensible little person. No girl is who has at once a turn of the romantic and a somewhat hasty temper. Placid, steady-going people set her down at once as wild and foolish. But she often saw more truly into the reality of things than shrewd and commonplace persons could do. She hardly knew where her father conducted his business in town, or what manner of business it was, but she divined, in some instinctive way, that the people who dined with him generally despised him.

One of the persons who afforded her a great deal of amusement, and caused her a little vexation, was her aunt, Mrs. Granger. This lady lived, as so many ladies do, for fashion. Her means were very limited, considering her objects, and she was a perfect martyr to the struggle between objects and means. When she gave a dinner party, or more often an evening party, she suffered unheard-of agonies in advance and afterwards. There was agony about doing the thing properly and the minimum of cost; the agony lest any of the best people should fail to come; the agony about the attendance, and so forth. When Jennie and Alicia dined with her *en famille*, they positively had not enough to eat. They were healthy girls, with good appetites, and they could have eaten ever so much more if they had had it. If there were but four present, Mrs. Granger, Mr. Granger, and the

two nieces, all the state of the highest occasion was observed, the same silver dishes, the same *epergne*, the same display of flowers, the same attendance, the same low dresses and bare arms; the same little sips of wine, in appropriate glasses, at the right time. All this pageantry sometimes surrounded two or three mutton-chops, which Jennie alone could have eaten if she were hungry. Of late she took good care not to be, for she made a specially substantial meal at home at luncheon, and so she was able to sustain her character for ladylike abstemiousness at her aunt's, and to diminish but slightly the slender substance of the feast.

All this Alicia took with placid good temper, and even respect. Alicia liked her aunt, and considered all her ceremonials becoming to her station, and therefore impressive and august. Alicia was a very good girl. It is so good not to have any sense of the ridiculous! "Passion never laughs," says a poet and a thinker. Many people believe that Virtue never laughs.

But Jennie could not help laughing, however; although she liked her aunt, and was personally rather grateful to her, she could never get over the coldness with which Mrs. Granger treated the father of her nieces. For a long time Jennie had gone to Mrs. Granger's in a rebellious spirit, against her will, and only because her father and sister talked her into it. For Jennie, like many hot-tempered young persons, was always doing things she would rather not do. She began by protesting vehemently against being asked to do this or that, and grew angry because she was asked to do it; then she said something sharp, and in a few minutes she was sorry, was afraid she had hurt somebody's feelings, was longing to do anything in the way of atonement, and was only too glad to be allowed to do the very thing to which, in the first instance, she had so warmly objected. So she went to Mrs. Granger's, and at length grew into the habit of going there whenever she was bidden, and thinking nothing about it.

But now an odd change had suddenly taken place. She became as anxious to go to Mrs. Granger's as she would formerly have been to stay away. Her aunt Granger came to be of singular value and interest in her eyes. Her aunt asked her to stay in Denzill Street for a few days, and she went joyously, although with penitent conscience, for she was leaving behind her Alicia, and the tree on the lawn, and the

lovely views all across the Surrey common. She went with sparkling eyes, and perhaps with shame-blushing cheeks; delighted to go, penitent to find herself delighted, afraid to confess to herself why she was glad, or why she was ashamed. In truth, she was willing and joyful to go to Aunt Granger's dull little house in Denzill Street, where she would never have quite enough to eat, because there was a dim faint shadow of a shade of a chance that Mr. Tyrone might come there, or that they might meet him somewhere.

There was one place of all others which, when Jennie came to Denzill Street, she wished to see. This was the House of Commons. She so particularly longed to hear a debate. Mrs. Granger was glad. She liked girls to show some interest in the House of Commons. It was the right sort of thing. All young ladies of good position liked to go to the Ladies' Gallery. She had never known that Jennie cared about such things, by which Aunt Lucy really meant that she never supposed that Mr. Aspar's daughter could have had such an instinctive appreciation of the respectabilities. She was greatly pleased, she knew ever so many members, she would make arrangements at once, and take Jennie to the House.

So she did: and they went one fine evening, Mr. Granger accompanying them, to give them into the custody of a member. Jennie's heart was beating as they were conducted through echoing halls and crowded lobbies, and corridors, that seemed all windows, and corridors that seemed all gloom and dusk, past white statues and fading frescoes, and the effigies of kings and queens and princes on painted panes. Apart from all peculiar and personal emotion, Jennie was intensely excited by the prospect of what she was to see. Away, immured in her quiet home, she had often wondered what that great arena must be like, where the grand political battles were fought, which seemed so fittingly the field for modern men to show their power. She had formed an idea of something stately and awful: something to hold one's breath as one gazed at it. She was hurried, all bewildered and dazed, into the Ladies' Gallery: and they took their seats: and—"Aunt Lucy, is *that* the House of Commons?"

For Jennie only saw an oblong, commonplace room, with a large clock staring at her from beneath a gallery filled with commonplace-looking persons: a room with rows of green leather benches, and the benches occupied by lounging and

yawning men, who did not appear in the least to resemble Roman senators. Some buzzing, humming conversation was going on below, of which Jennie could hardly catch a word. The whole thing looked so uninteresting. That the House of Commons? Why, that was exactly her idea of a vestry-meeting, as Dickens would have described it: of a board-room: of something parochial, unheroic, and unpicturesque. Jennie's heart at first sank within her. There was one illusion gone, anyhow.

However, she had not come there merely to see the House of Commons.

From her seat behind the gilded bars, Jennie looked eagerly down into the House. There was nobody there—nobody in her sense; although the House was rather full. Suddenly there was a commotion, and members began to rush out as if the building was on fire. Jennie looked up at her aunt inquiringly. "What a disappointment!" said Mrs. Granger. The important debate which was to have come on had gone off somehow, collapsed unexpectedly. Jennie was at once depressed. Was there nothing else? Nothing to speak of; only some Irish question. Jennie trembled; and managed to say that she thought she should like to remain a little longer just to see a little more—if aunt would be so kind—and then her voice failed her, and her heart beat fast and her eyes swam, and she fancied in her mingled delight and alarm that everybody in the Ladies' Gallery, in the House, in the galleries opposite, *must* observe her emotion, for *he* had just come in. He was there, standing down below in front of her, surveying the House as coolly as though he were Mr. Speaker, and owned the whole concern. How handsome he looked, and careless and unconscious, with his hand in his pocket, as he stood there near the door. Then he went and took a seat, and began apparently to be very attentive; and once or twice removed his hat suddenly (Jennie was surprised to see so many gentlemen with their hats on), and partly rose from his seat, as if to speak, but sat down again, and resumed his hat, for something or other was being debated, and some tiresome old man (a leading member of the Government, Mrs. Granger told Jennie,) would persist in prosing away, although Mr. Tyrone evidently wanted to speak. Jennie half confessed to herself, with a little secret pang, that she didn't quite like Mr. Tyrone's hair parted in the middle. It seemed

go like a mere coxcomb or a woman. Perhaps, too, his loves looked rather dainty. But what of that? She crushed such mean, ignoble criticism; and, besides, what did it matter to *her?*

"Do you see the young man seated near Mr. Prinker there, Jennie?" her aunt whispered; "the handsome young man, who has just taken off his hat, with the curling hair parted in the middle—no, not there, my dear, but on the right."

"I see him, aunt."

"That's Mr. Tyrone, the young Irish member, who——"

"Yes, aunt, I know; I saw him before."

"Indeed, Jennie. Where?"

"He dined with us one day, aunt. Hush, pray." These last two words came out with a touch of Jennie's wonted impatience.

For the prosing person had sat down, mumbling something which he had not quite finished even when he took his seat, but kept mumbling still to the table; and several members had risen, and—Jennie hardly knew how or why—only one of them kept his position, and the others collapsed, and she was aware that Tyrone was speaking. For the first few sentences she could hardly be said to listen. Only the voice filled her ear and possessed her. It was a strange, indescribable ecstasy to sit there and hear his voice. All else silent; only that voice heard! It was clear, musical, vibrating, with a ring of scorn in it, or complaint, for Tyrone was angry about something or other. He used but a few easy gestures; only a quick motion of the hand now and then. He spoke but a few sentences, clear, vivid, animated, without any exaggeration; a conversational pitch, and hardly any more. Such as it was, the speech didn't seem to please some of the listeners—and the House was only half full—for there was a good deal of growling dissent, and there was some interruption, at which Tyrone flashed out a bright sarcasm, and there was laughter. A sharp, rapid sentence more, and the whole thing was over. Tyrone had not spoken for ten minutes altogether. Was that a speech? Jennie wondered. Was that eloquence? It was delightful to *her*, and the voice was unlike anything she had ever heard. But how short it was, and how easily it seemed to be done! And now the House was blank again, for Tyrone had gone.

So, when Mr. Prinker, M.P., "the eminent financier," who had brought them into the House, came to tell them that

there would be nothing else worth listening to, Jennie was glad. When Mr. Prinker, a handsome, mellifluous, bald, and elderly gentleman, knowing that Jennie was new to Westminster Palace, offered to show the ladies over the place, she was glad too, for, after all, she liked to remain a little longer. Just as they were traversing one of the galleries whom did they see, right in their way, but Mr. Tyrone. He was walking slowly towards them, talking with the Hon. Captain Cadsby (son of old Cadsby, the Whig banker, lately made a peer for his eminent services in looking wise on the benches just behind the Ministry when the Whigs were in power, during five-and-twenty sessions), and he was looking down. Jennie thought he would pass them without looking up, and she did not know whether to be glad or sorry. For she thought he probably would not recognise her, and she knew that, however natural this might be, it would mortify and afflict her terribly, and that she could never muster up a pleasant word for the rest of the evening, and could never get on with Mrs. Granger. All this passed through her mind in half a second, and was in vain, for Mr. Tyrone looked up and saw her, and recognised her, and took off his hat to her; and to her aunt, of course, whom he knew slightly already; and, leaving Captain Cadsby, he came up and joined the party, and talked to Mrs. Granger in the most charming way, Jennie thought, and in another moment they were all walking on; Mr. Prinker ahead with Mrs. Granger, and Jennie with Mr. Tyrone following.

Mr. Tyrone was very kind to the little maid, who seemed to him ever so young. Tyrone, with all his follies and faults, had a sweet and generous nature, which readily opened itself to sympathy with that of a pure and bright girl. He felt quite a pleasure in showing Jennie all the frescoes and statues and corridors, and hearing her fresh and animated remarks. It was like going over a foreign city with which one is familiar in the company of an intelligent and ingenuous fellow-traveller, to whom all is new. Jennie knew so little of some subjects, and so much of others, was so well acquainted with out-of-the-way chapters of history, with unpopular poems, with at least the story of this or that painting or statue, and so little acquainted with the ways of the House, and of politics, that her talk was quite interesting. Sometimes she began to be afraid that she was talking too much, and was on the point of saying so.

"I heard your speech to-night," she said, suddenly.

"That wasn't a speech; only a few words."

"Yes, it was very short. May I come and hear you make a regular speech sometimes?"

"I don't often make long speeches."

"But you are a very good speaker, I have heard."

Tyrone smiled. "I don't care about second-class speaking," he said. "There are only two or three really good speakers in the House, and I am not one of them."

"How beautiful that is—oh, how very beautiful!"

It was the view along and from the terrace which drew forth this exclamation. They had now just come on the terrace. It was a soft, warm evening, between sinking twilight and rising moon. The river looked silvery-grey in the faint light. The old Palace at Lambeth was steeped in a softening beauty; all unsightly objects faded; a barge, with a heavy sail of dark brown, floated slowly along the stream. The lights from the House itself showed orange and crimson in the night; a star or two was seen in the sky. Jennie felt her heart leap up at the beauty of the scene and the influence of the hour.

"I never thought there was anything so beautiful in London—although Wordsworth——" And then she suddenly stopped, afraid that her companion would think her a foolish and romantic person. "Don't you think it exquisite?"

"I can't say I ever thought much about it. One doesn't think of beauty in London."

"Oh, yes. At least we ought to."

"Well, you shall teach me all the beauty of this. Now begin."

"Nonsense; the idea of my teaching you! But you can read Wordsworth."

"No, I can't. At least I have tried often, and failed. But I should be more ready to learn of you. Come, tell me all about this scene, and Wordsworth."

"Oh, I couldn't, I have not the courage; besides, if you don't feel it yourself, it would be useless. But I know that you do feel it."

"How do you know?"

"Because you are so much affected by music, even when it is not very well played. "Don't you remember the Irish air?"

"Indeed I do remember. Shall I never hear you play it again?"

"As often as you like; I mean when you please—I don't know how to say it. I am afraid you thought me a very rude, ill-conditioned girl that night."

"No, indeed; I had not much opportunity of hearing you speak."

"You didn't think about me at all!" said Jennie, with a musical little laugh. "Well, it served me right—is that slang?—for I meant to be rude and bitter, and to offend you terribly! And all thrown away. You were quite unconscious. But I am sorry and penitent, and I apologize all the same."

"I forgive you on condition that I may hear you play on the harp again. But why did you want to offend me so terribly?"

"Well, because you seemed proud and disdainful, and seemed to think so much of yourself. And—oh, pray forgive me now, Mr. Tyrone, in good earnest, for talking in such a way, and making myself ridiculous."

"I am sorry," he said, quite gravely, "that you should have thought me such an unpleasant person. I didn't intend to be so. But, pardon me, I believe I did think, at first, that you were very, very young."

"Just a little girl, in fact! Very well; then I forgive you for that, which is a grave offence, and so we are quits."

At this moment Mrs. Granger disturbed the talk, for she declared it time to go home. Mr. Tyrone accompanied the ladies to their carriage, and asked permission to call. Then he bowed, and went back to the House with Mr. Prinker, and they drove home.

At first Jennie felt happy and elate, and all the air around her seemed filled with gladness. Then suddenly everything darkened down within her, and she became wretched. For she thought she had talked absurdly and pertly to Mr. Tyrone, and made an odious exhibition of herself. Oh, why, she asked herself, why had she talked in that sort of way? What had prompted her to be so flippant and foolish? The more she went over the conversation in her memory the more she felt ashamed of her own part in it. She would have liked to cover her face with her hands then and there. She hardly knew how to answer Mrs. Granger when the latter talked to her. The rest of the evening was miserable. And Jennie lay awake in her bed half the night through, and cried tears of foolish vexation and shame; and wondered, through all, whether *he* would really call before she returned to Surrey.

## CHAPTER V.

Maurice Tyrone was a person who had hitherto accustomed himself to think little of any inclination but his own, of any impelling motive but his own impulse. Happily he had come into the world with a kindly heart, and a frank, sweet nature, which refused to be wholly spoiled. From his earliest childhood he had been talked by those around him into believing himself a sort of exiled and ruined prince, the representative of a lost cause. When he came into his property he spent it as became a prince; that is, he flung it away upon idle show, and on favourites, who were often good for nothing. He came to England with a certain hostile and aggressive pride in supposing himself a sort of anachronism; and he was not a little surprised to find that an anachronism may become the welcome ornament of a London saloon when it presents itself in the form of a handsome and accomplished young man, who appears to have plenty of money, and is adorned by a kind of semi-mythical rank. Tyrone was at once piqued and charmed by the welcome he received in English society, and the boyish, harmless vanity, which hitherto he had allowed to hold such sway over his actions, was soothed, flattered, and stimulated. Tyrone went in for display, and became a lion. He had come to England only to carry out his purpose of being an Irish representative in Parliament, but he began to enjoy very readily his social success. In the House of Commons, too, he spoke remarkably well, displaying an easy, concise force, which was peculiarly attractive, and propounding the most aggravating doctrines and questions with a graceful moderation of tone, which made them all the more effective. In short, he became a distinct personage, an individuality in London politics and society. The newspapers all denounced him, and all the journalists personally liked him. His extravagances became famous, and rumour imputed to him many indiscretions and follies of which he had never been guilty. A noble delusion preserves a man often from ignoble errors and vices. Perhaps Mr. Tyrone might have sunk to be a mere voluptuary if he had not been upheld by the generous, melancholy dream, that it was possible to play the part of an O'Neill or a Geraldine in the nineteenth century, in Belgravia, in West-

minster Palace, with a Manchester member and an Irish Ultramontane for colleagues and allies, and with frank loyalty to British monarchy as a condition precedent.

A very few years found Tyrone on the verge of pecuniary ruin, and still at once too proud and too weak to acknowledge realities and face them out. A dash of the cynical began to grow up in him, chiefly because of the self-examination which the very necessities of his existence forced upon him. Temptation, as he considered it, presented itself to him on two sides. He might, perhaps, accept (or obtain) some place under Government, which would save him from personal ruin, at the expense of all that dignity of Irish chieftain which he still delighted to wear; or he might marry a lady who was still young, who was remarkably handsome and attractive, who was immensely rich, and who, he could not doubt, would have him if he only asked her. This would save all chances, for she was a woman who would be only too glad to help him to sustain the part of Irish chief by herself becoming Irish chieftainess if he wished it. But Tyrone shrank from the self-shame of this mercenary surrender. Even if he had loved her, he would have shrunk from accepting rescue from ruin out of the generous hand of a woman. She was charming, kindly, devoted to him; he felt an almost painful sense of gratefulness to her. Sometimes he could hardly help yielding to the magic of her personal attractions, and her warm, emotional nature. But his pride and his self-love had hitherto come to his rescue.

And yet—and yet—something must be done. It was in this condition of mood and of difficulty that Tyrone found himself when Jennie Aspar's harp struck an unexpected and profoundly sympathetic chord in his sensitive, impulsive Celtic nature. If from that hour he had never seen the child again he would never have forgotten her. It was not she alone; it was not the music alone. He might have gone to a concert, and, having glanced at the programme and seen that that particular air was set down for performance, have waited calmly for it, and listened with pleasure while some harpist far superior to Jennie made it thrill from the vibrating string, and have forgotten all about it in an hour. But as he heard it at Mr. Aspar's, the scene, the time, the surroundings, the business he had come for, the purposes he was beginning in his wavering soul to contemplate, the unexpected irruption of the music upon worldly plans, and confused,

scattered hopes, smote him with an influence entirely peculiar, and not to be forgotten. It came to him almost as the Easter chorus comes on Faust. It came, at least, like a voice from the regions of romantic and generous dreamland, whence came once his highest and least selfish purposes, calling him to be true to the dreams of his youth, and not to sell even a noble folly for the pay of a Ministry or the bounty of a woman.

He would, therefore, have remembered Jennie Aspar had he never seen her again. But when they met again, her somewhat strange blending of fresh, childlike innocence and piquant cleverness was so pleasing, new, and attractive to him, that he could not or would not deny himself the sense of a new enjoyment. He called at Denzill Street every day while Jennie stayed there. He took Mrs. Granger and her niece to the Ladies' Gallery, and walked with them on the terrace more than once. He was especially glad when one day that he happened to call Mrs. Granger happened not to be at home, and he had half an hour's tête-à-tête with Jennie. Mrs. Granger was very well pleased that her niece should be admired. It gave Jennie a new value if she drew fashionable young men to Denzill Street. She made Jennie lengthen her stay. She sent for Alicia too. The Hon. Captain Cadsby came with Tyrone to call, and came again and again on his own account, and was very attentive to Alicia.

"Mr. Tyrone," said Jennie, the day that he found her alone, "I have just been reading something about you in this stupid paper. What does it all mean? Is it true that you hate England and English people, and that you would be a rebel if you could? Rebel against what?"

Tyrone smiled.

"All that means nothing. It's just the right sort of thing to say, I suppose. Perhaps I shall meet the man who wrote it in the club smoking-room to-night, and we shall find that we agree in almost all our opinions."

"But what untruthfulness! Write one thing and think another."

"No, not quite that. A man expresses his own opinions in private conversation; the opinions of his newspaper—that is, the opinion of the average Philistine mind—when he writes. At least I suppose so."

"I wouldn't write a line that I didn't believe every word of."

"Nor I. But I haven't been trained to the thing."

"You couldn't be trained to *that*, I am sure." But now, do you hate English people?"

"All my warmest friends are English, I think. I sometimes feel as if I were a sort of renegade because of that very thing."

"But why? Now that is just what I want to know. Why do you feel yourself like a renegade? Why shouldn't you love England as well as I do?"

"Well, you are English, Miss Aspar, and I am Irish."

"Still I don't understand. May I not love Ireland? I think I do love her already."

"I fear it's a long story and a weary one."

"I wish you would tell me, if you don't think me rude for asking, or too stupid to understand."

Tyrone stood up and walked to the chimney piece, against which he leaned, with one hand in his pocket, and an expression of humorous embarrassment on his face.

"We were conquered, you know," he began.

"Hundreds of years ago! Yes. Well?"

"We don't like the idea even yet. We have never quite got over it. Good-humoured English people, who are winners in most things, can't understand that, and think us sullen, and foolish, and impossible to please. I come of a family which, for seven centuries, has been always in rebellion. I am the first of my house who ever was willing to live in peace under an English government. The Celtic nature is not the least in the world like the Anglo-Saxon. With us everything is a sentiment. We can't help it; English people don't understand that, can't understand it. There are times when I could laugh at my own folly, or feel ashamed of it; but I can't get over it for all that. What would you have?"

"But you don't really want another rebellion?"

"Of course not. I am not a lunatic or a criminal; and, believe me, I am deeply attached to England and English people. But I cannot forget that I belong to a people and a family which suffered half a dozen conquests, and countless confiscations. Perhaps this is absurd. We cannot help it. I told you once of the Banshee? Very well. The national fancy which originated the Banshee isn't quite the same as that which is represented by the Metropolitan Railway. We don't believe in the Banshee now any more than you, but it is to us a thing intelligible and in keeping."

"Then do you mean that you and we—the Irish and the English—never can get on together?"

"Oh, no; but that the people must not be surprised if the bond does not become close and living all at once. You mustn't be impatient. You must allow to the conquered the consolation of his grievance."

"So many hundred years," said Jennie, musingly, "and not forgotten yet."

"Yes," said Tyrone, with a sudden impetuosity, "I grow sometimes weary of the everlasting whine and moan, which never come to anything. I sometimes despise myself for joining in it, or encouraging it. So impotent and so vain!—when nothing can be done—nothing. We might, at least, have the dignity of patience and silence."

"When nothing can be done? You speak as if you were sorry nothing can be done. Isn't that very like what this paper says—as if you would be a rebel if——?"

"If I could? No; I wish for something better. So do we all, I hope—in Ireland I mean. But there are moments, of course, when the old spirit breaks out, let us do what we will. Every Irishman who is not a lacquey or a coward is a conquered rebel, Miss Aspar, and nothing else. This seems an odd anachronism, does it not, here in the nineteenth century, you and I talking together in sight of Piccadilly? It is true, though, all the same. Wherever you see an Irishman you see a man separated from the English friend who converses with him by the fact that the Irishman always feels himself the representative of a lost cause."

"I don't understand it," said Jennie. "But I wish *I* represented a lost cause."

"Why so?"

"Because I think it's poetic and romantic and interesting, and not commonplace."

Tyrone smiled.

"You have answered the fool according to his folly," he said, with a dash of bitterness in his tone. "I do believe there is a good deal of that feeling at the bottom of the whole thing."

He turned the conversation to some other subject, and would not go back to that any more then.

Jennie hunted up all the books she could get about Ireland in the rebel sense. She read the life of Hugh O'Neill and the songs of the *Nation*, and Lady Morgan's forgotten "O'Briens and O'Flaherties," and various other specimens of biography, minstrelsy, and fiction. She kept on at this

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sort of study for many days after she had left Denzill Street (we are now a little anticipating), and at last there began to rise up in her wondering mind the consciousness that, in two little islands side by side, there really were two different nations, different in race, temperament, traditions, and hopes. This was, to her, a new and wonderful discovery, It affected her with a deep sense of pain; for, womanlike, she had a personal sentiment mixed up with her contemplations of everything, and she feared that there must always be an utterly hopeless gap between England and Ireland—that is, between England and Mr. Tyrone—that is, between Mr. Tyrone and herself.

Meanwhile Mr. Tyrone was now having frequent interviews with Jennie's father at the office over the collection of curiosities. No plan seemed to unfold itself for the raising of money on Tyrone's property or prospects; and yet Tyrone must absolutely have money somehow. He had wasted everything except a little sum which had belonged to his mother, and was invested in Government securities. This gave him about three hundred a year, and he had always, amid whatever follies, steadily refused to cut up the poor little bird which gave those small golden eggs. He began to make up his mind that he would positively withdraw from all society, and live resolutely on that pittance. But just for the hour he wanted money badly, and he would have it—for this once, of course, for this last time. He had a good many valuable trinkets, some of them heirlooms, which hitherto he had not dreamed of parting with, but which now must needs go. Among them were a diamond cross, which had belonged to some ancient lady of the family, a star which King James II. had given to an ancestor, a sword which had a jewelled hilt, and was presented by Philip II. of Spain to a Tyrone, and a few other such treasures. Tyrone resolved to sell these for money. "I don't see what good they ever did to me," he murmured to himself, endeavouring to excuse his degeneracy, "except to fill my head with idle romance and folly. I'll begin a new career all the more appropriately by getting rid of them."

Mr. Aspar undertook to dispose of these reliques privately. He informed Tyrone that he should be able to get him a thousand pounds.

"Give me," said Tyrone, "two or three hundred pounds, and keep the rest for the present. I had rather you did, Mr. Aspar."

"But your banker, Mr. Tyrone: I query, sir, whether it would not be better——"

"I have not troubled myself much about a bank account this some time, Mr. Aspar. In fact, I have been a fool, and I am not quite free of my folly yet. If I had even those few hundred pounds in a bank, I should perhaps spend them all the same. But when I leave them with you, and tell you why I have done so, I shan't come to you next day, and confess that I have already broken my resolve."

"Well, sir, you gentlemen will, I suppose, be a little extravagant; we humble business men, of course, have not the way——"

"If that is to be a gentleman, Mr. Aspar, I think you might thank Heaven that you are not one! If you can make a resolve and keep it, if you can save the money you have honestly earned, you are far more of a gentleman than—than other people, I think. But I am going to try to be a gentleman, too, in that sense. Keep the money for me."

"With pleasure, sir, since you wish it. Shall I advance you three hundred pounds now? Then when I receive the money for you, I will give you a formal memorandum."

"Thanks; yes. I should like it now."

Mr. Aspar counted over the notes, which Tyrone crushed up together and thrust into his pocket. Tyrone conversed with Mr. Aspar more respectfully than had been his wont. The growth of his acquaintance with Jennie had made him more disposed to find merit in her father, and to give up that kind of manner, *de haut en bas*, with which he had been accustomed to treat him. Still Tyrone could not bring himself there, over that curiosity shop, to tell Mr. Aspar the moneylender how often of late he had visited his daughter. He could not come to a level of equality there. But some word or other hastily dropped made it clear to Mr. Aspar now that his client was a frequent visitor at Mrs. Granger's. He made up his mind that Jennie and her sister must at once return home.

Tyrone, as he passed down the stairs, encountered the sedate Carpenter, who bowed with reverential gravity. Tyrone hardly saw him. Our hero was, for the moment, very much elated. He had some money again, and could think of nothing just then but the fact that he could hide his ruin from Jennie's eyes for a few days, and seem to her still something like the descendant of princes

Carpenter knocked softly at his master's door, and then entered. Mr. Aspar was seated in an old chair drawn up to an old desk. The room was very shabby. Mr. Aspar only cared for handsome and costly things to please his daughters. He was biting his nails, and as a ray of sun fell upon his thin whiskers, and the lines about his face, he was looking very much aged.

"Well, Carpenter," he asked, eagerly, "how are things looking?"

"Bad, sir—very bad."

Mr. Aspar sighed.

"As bad as we expected?" and he gazed up, with his head on one side.

"Worse, sir, worse."

He rubbed his hands through his hair fretfully, then he jumped up all in a nervous tremor.

"I'll bring those girls away, Carpenter," he screamed, "from that cursed old woman's house. She only wants them there to draw young west-end cubs around her. What would she care whom they married, or what happened? Carpenter, he goes there every day—after my little Jennie."

"Who, sir?"

"That fellow—that confounded, insolent, broken-down, Irish profligate, who gives himself the airs of a prince, by Jove! without a penny in his pocket. What a fool I was to bring him to the house. I thought there was a fortune left to him. I'll bring my girls home, Carpenter. She shall come home, I tell you—Jennie shall come home!"

Carpenter listened quietly. He had seen such fits come on his master of late, and he knew the reason why. In another moment Mr. Aspar put his head between his hands and burst into tears.

"Oh, Carpenter," he sobbed, in a low tone, "I've only worked, and slaved, and thought for them, for my girls—to make them ladies—to leave them rich, and I shall die—I shall die! and they wont have a sixpence in the world!"

Meanwhile, Tyrone, sauntering slowly westward, was meditating on the caprices of fate, which doomed the descendant of princes to poverty, and gave wealth to an old money-lender and shopkeeper in London. Likewise, he wondered how the mean and commonplace personage came to have, besides his wealth, the treasure of such a pretty daughter—a daughter whom even the descendant of princes might strive to please.

## CHAPTER VI.

We have already spoken of a lady whom Tyrone might have married. It was to her house he went when, the night we first saw him, he turned moodily out of Palace Yard.

Mrs. Richmond Lorn had become, in a certain sense, one of the celebrities of the London season. She was rich, she was a widow, she was beautiful. Mrs. Lorn was dark of complexion, almost like a Cuban, with deep eyes, which gleamed like liquid jewels, and hair that naturally crisped and waved. She had a fine figure, full, but not exuberant; and her neck and shoulders were in their way perfection, and only fell short of perfection in every way, because, when they were displayed in evening dress, they were so white and beautiful as to attract at first perhaps a disproportionate amount of attention. A stranger seeing Mrs. Lorn in a room for the first time was sure to ask either "who is the lady with the eyes?" or "who is the lady with the shoulders?"

Mrs. Lorn was an American. She came from Virginia. Now Virginia is or was an old-fashioned England, with the feudalism unextinguished. It is a great thing to belong to one of the first families of Virginia—the "F. F. V.'s" as satirical Northerners call them. Not to be of the F. F. V.'s is to be nothing. Mrs. Lorn came of one of the first among the first. She was a beautiful girl, and a *belle* in her youth, but she was also a girl of some talent, and she went in for achieving distinction, or having a mission. Down in Dixie's Land they have a whole swarm of wonderful women, poetesses, novelists, artists, and so forth, whose fame never crosses the borders of the old slave dominion, but whom they adore and glorify down there, and on whom they lavish the most gorgeous expletives of praise. It was very easy for a pretty woman with money to become one of that gifted band. The men never troubled themselves much about such intellectual competition, but left their wives and sisters to do all the glowing novels and the impassioned verses, and were proud to believe that they had Southern Sapphos, De Staels, and Dudevants in their own family circles. Mrs. Lorn, then Miss Selina Saulsbury, enrolled herself as a novelist and poetess, and was held by her admirers to threaten the laurels of the illustrious Mrs. Northwit, the feminine Walter Scott of the South, in the former field of glory, and to have dimmed

the lustre of the Southern Corinna, the renowned lady who signed herself "Starfire" in the latter.

But Miss Saulsbury desired a mission and a deed. She had a kindly heart, and she loved to do startling things. She became an abolitionist, and being a wealthy orphan, mistress of herself, she emancipated all her slaves. Thus she threw down, with an echoing clang, half her fortune, and she was denounced in her native State. She paid a visit to Saratoga, spent a winter in New York city, received several offers of marriage, and finally married Mr. Richmond Lorn, a man of great wealth, from Buffalo, in New York State. They came to Europe not long before the Confederate rebellion broke out; and in Europe they remained, Mrs. Lorn thinking America inferior and unattractive as regarded its social life. They lived in Rome, in Florence, in Dresden, in Paris. They had one child, a little boy, born about a year after their marriage; and four years after that Mr. Richmond Lorn died.

Mrs. Lorn lamented him becomingly, although she had never made it any secret to him or to her more intimate friends that he was not her ideal, that their natures hardly corresponded, and that he was rather practical, unaspiring, and unimaginative. Lately she had come to live in London, and was devoting herself, she said, to her boy. On his behalf, doubtless, she gave a great many charming little dinner parties and crowded receptions, and did her best to make her way into brilliant London society. People said that she was looking for an English husband and an English title. They said that her mission and her aspiration were now to become Lady Something or other.

It was to one of Mrs. Lorn's evening parties that Maurice Tyrone went that night when with uncertain steps he turned away from the House of Commons. Certainly, if Mrs. Lorn panted for an English title there was no such honour to be obtained through Tyrone. Yet he was one of her most particular favourites. From her first meeting with him, she admired him, and said so to every one, himself included. She began to take, she declared, quite a maternal interest in him. He was not so much older than her boy, she said. The boy was thirteen.

A wonderful little boy he was. Small and slender for his years, with curly hair, sparkling dark eyes, and thin sallow face, he had so much intelligence and precocity condensed

into his little visage, that he might have reminded the beholder of one of the ancient fairies who thought fit to substitute themselves for stolen children, and who were discovered by the supernatural shrewdness and antiquity peering out from under their shrivelled eyelids. Master Lorn had been set to study so early in Germany and France, and had himself such a natural love of reading, that already he could discourse of Schiller, Shakespere, Racine, and Heine, had studied Darwin, and was fond of Quarterly Reviews. But he was a bright and spry little man, too, full of animal spirits for all his Darwin, a gallant and devoted admirer of his mother, the pet of his mother's servants, and the perplexity of every new visitor to Mrs. Lorn. Young Lorn was almost as warm an admirer of Tyrone as his mother; looked up to him with as much of personal homage as this premature youth could exhibit towards any son of earth, and in his way endeavoured to dress and make up after his friend and leader. He tried to part his curly little mop of hair down the middle, he bathed his kerchiefs in perfume, he wore gloves of the colour specially favoured by Tyrone, had a fashion of buttoning his little frock coat by one button at the waist as Tyrone had, and a way of standing with one hand thrust into one pocket, as Tyrone was accustomed to do. Having heard somehow that Tyrone was deeply in debt, he longed to be in debt too, but his mamma gave him so much money that he really could not work himself into that blest condition. But he was proud to think that as Tyrone came of a grand old family, nearly faded out now, so, too, did he, at least on the side of his mother.

Mrs. Lorn lived in a house near the Marble Arch. She had taken the house for a year or two from its owner, who was abroad; and elegantly furnished as it was already, she had spent money in still further ornamenting it. One morning she is reclining picturesquely on a sofa, and holds a novel in her hand, at which she sometimes glances.

Master Theodore Lorn entered dressed for some expedition out of doors evidently. His little coat was nattily held in at the waist by the one button; a handkerchief just showed its snowy tip from his breast pocket; he had a tiny silver-headed cane in his hand.

"Are you going out, darling?"

"Soon, mamma. I say, how charming you do look this morning."

"Do I, Theodore? I am glad. You look pale, my child; I hope you have not been studying too much."

"Oh, well, you see this Greek is rather of a bore; but I want to know all about it. Every fellow studies—every fellow who has anything in him. It never hurts us—don't you believe a word of it! Look at the men in the House: they sit up half the night. Look at Tyrone! There is a chap to sit up! He never looks half so fresh as when he has gone to bed at four o'clock in the morning, and tumbled up at eight."

"But Mr. Tyrone is a man, my love, and strong——"

"Think I'm not strong? You just feel that biceps—couldn't I punch a fellow's head! There is that cad Charley Rivers——"

"That what, darling?"

"That cad, mamma. Cad, don't you know?—mean, shabby, that sort of thing."

"Don't you think you learn a little too much slang, Theodore?"

"Every one talks slang now: girls even. Cad's a great word of Tyrone's."

"Oh, indeed."

"Tyrone says he doesn't like to hear women talk slang, though."

"He doesn't hear me indulge in such language, Theodore."

"No: so he says; and he says you're right."

"Does he—Mr. Tyrone—often—sometimes talk of me, Theodore?"

You bet! I mean of course he does: ever so often."

"What does he say, love?"

"Oh, praises you, you know—that sort of thing. Rum if he didn't——"

"Rum, darling?"

"Yes—queer, you know."

"Rum is a drink, my dear—sailors and people drink it."

Theodore burst into a genuine and boyish little spirt of laughter.

"Oh, I say—it isn't *that* rum. Rum is an adjective signifying odd, droll, absurd. See Dr. Johnson, Noah Webster, Walker, and the Slang Dictionary. But I say, mamma; is Tyrone coming to call here to-day?"

"I think—perhaps he is."

"Well, it doesn't matter—I'll walk over and give *him* a call anyhow, and I'll bring him along to luncheon if I can. But

he knows such a lot of swells, he is always going somewhere."

Mrs. Lorn toyed with the bracelet on her wrist, turning it slowly round and round, and only once sending a glance from her deep and liquid eyes into the unconscious face of her complacent boy. Perhaps it ought to have relieved her from some of her embarrassment that a servant came in and handed her a card. She took it as a means of relief, but when she had looked at it a new and deeper embarrassment came on her.

"What's up, mamma?"

"A visit, dear, from a Colonel Quentin—do you know any Colonel Quentin?"

"Never heard the name in my life; who's he—what's his regiment?"

"I don't know. Let the gentleman come up, Leonard—you won't care to stay, Theodore?"

"No, mamma, I'm off. See you soon again." He went daintily up to her, stepping jauntily in his little shiny boots, kissed her hand with the air of a gallant, and left the room by another door than that which the visitor was to enter.

Mrs. Lorn again looked at the card. It bore the words "Colonel Quentin, U.S.A." The latter initials, representing "United States Army," Mrs. Lorn had not mentioned when speaking to her son.

"Colonel Quentin? Quentin?" she repeated the words slowly to herself. "I never knew any Quentin but the one."

That moment the visitor himself was announced. Colonel Quentin was rather tall, very muscular, but thin, without an ounce of flesh anywhere to spare on him. He had a sallow face and close-cropped black hair, and a thick black moustache. He was fashionably dressed, but looked somehow like one of the darkest of forest Indians disguised as a gentleman. There was something about him of the bravo: something of the professional gambler of the Mississippi steamers. From the hat which he held in his hand to the tips of his boots he was all shine: and the glitter was the more remarkable because of the saturnine expression of his face. He bowed so low that the bunch of hot-house flowers in his button-hole was occulted from Mrs. Lorn's point of view.

Before he had time to speak, Mrs. Lorn rose from her seat and advanced to meet him.

"You are Philip Quentin!" she said, in a low voice.

"I am Philip Quentin, Mrs. Lorn. The same—no, not quite the same——"

"You are changed in appearance since last we met." The lady laid a delicate little emphasis on the word "we."

"Changed in appearance! I should think so. I am forty years old, I've been in a dozen battles, I spent a year in the Libby prison in Richmond: I've been wounded and half-starved, and frozen and scorched! There's not a joint nor a limb about me that hasn't felt steel or ball, or fire, or something of the kind! Yes, I have changed, Mrs. Lorn, in appearance and otherwise. You have led a different sort of life, and you have not changed."

"Philip," she laid her hand gently upon his sleeve and looked up into his eyes—"Philip, have you come to see your old friend only to reproach her?"

"Not I," he answered, with seeming carelessness; "I haven't said a word of the kind."

"But you have not forgiven me?"

"Oh yes, long since. I *have* changed. The romantic has been a good deal worked out of me since the days when I acted like a fool, Mrs. Lorn, and you acted like——"

"Like a coquette, you were going to say? Like a false and heartless girl, that's what you meant to say."

"Something like that."

"I don't deserve it—I don't indeed! Sit down: no, sit near me: there! We must be friends. Listen to me. I was very fond of you then, Philip—I was indeed. But I did not believe I could make you happy or you me. Nearly all my fortune was gone, and you had nothing. I knew myself and my ambition, and *your* ambition. Talk to me of people like us being happy in genteel poverty! I had to make a resolve; I went to New York and I found my destiny."

"In less poetic words, you married old Lorn for his money."

"I did—I don't pretend to deny it. Would it have pleased you better if I had married somebody for love? I made him a good wife; no word of reproach ever came on me. Did there?"

"I believe not. I never heard of any. Perhaps if I had known of any reproach at the time I should have been glad, for I should have made use of it to punish you, if I could."

"No, you wouldn't! No, you wouldn't, Philip! I know you better. I know how full of pity your heart always was for our womanly weaknesses! Ah, we are miserably weak,

we creatures whom you call goddesses when you flatter us and tyrants when you laugh at us! We need all your charity and pity, even the best of us, from the worst of you! No, Philip, even if I had wronged you, you never would have injured me."

She talked so earnestly that one might have thought she was really pleading to avert some present danger.

"Well," he replied, "I would not injure you *now*, that is certain. Listen, Mrs. Lorn. Men don't, I find, keep on always caring about a woman, even though she has thrown them over. But I did feel your treatment of me at the time. It *did* play the devil with part of my life. What an idiot I was! As sure as you sit there, I flung myself, over and over again, in the way of death because of you. Well, let me be honest with you; I don't feel that way any more."

"You have forgotten me," she said, quietly.

"Not forgotten, as you see, for I have found you out, and here I am. But I am not wild about you any more. I shan't complain if you fall in love with somebody else and marry him. I have passed my forty years, and I suppose I know the worth of a lass. I'll not say I forgive you, for there's a twang of Christian virtue about such words that I don't pretend to; but I don't bear any malice."

"You were always generous," she murmured, although not quite certain whether that was the right thing to say at the moment. His hard coldness somewhat puzzled her. He evidently would not be sentimental or passionate, or play a part in a scene. He seemed to have grown terribly practical. Her memory went back to certain moonlight melting scenes of highflown sentiment steeped in a pretty warm atmosphere of passion, and she felt herself covered with shame at the recollection. "Does *he* remember all that too?" she asked of herself, in a kind of terror.

"I was generous to you," he said, "and at least more generous, by Jove! than most wild young fellows would have been. You were a warm-blooded girl in those days, Mrs. Lorn, and if I hadn't thought more of you than you did of yourself——"

"Oh, for shame! Oh, don't!" She covered her face with her hands.

"I remember *all*, you see! How could I help remembering? I have all your letters—some of them fond and foolish enough to make people believe you had been even more foolish than you were——"

"Philip," she said, looking up with a pale and frightened face, "you have not really kept those letters—the silly letters of a mad romantic girl? You have not kept them?"

"I have them all—every one. I had a kind of notion once of sending them along to old Lorn, but I suppose I was too generous; and, besides, I don't think his gutta-percha heart would have been much disturbed."

"I told him all," she interposed, quickly.

"Yes, after your own fashion, no doubt. You will excuse me, Mrs. Lorn, if I say that you never were remarkable for accuracy of statement. Anyhow, I have the letters."

"What use could you make of them? What could you do with them? Suppose you were to publish them in the papers, who will think the worse of me now because I was a wild romantic girl ever so many years ago, and threw away my heart upon a man who was unworthy of it?"

He smiled rather grimly.

"The letters are a little equivocal here and there, and some people might read them wrongly. Besides, all this talk's useless with me. I know what you are about. I have been looking over the game."

"What do you mean?"

"Only that you have given your susceptible heart away again to a man whom you believe worthy of it this time. I know it all, Mrs. Lorn. You are in love with my cousin Tyrone."

"Your cousin?"

"Cousin of some sort—I'm not very clear upon the exact relationship. Old Tyrone, of New York, who made all the money, was married to my mother's sister. In this little world, Mrs. Lorn, we are bound up together—all one family."

"I never knew of this."

"I never thought much about it, or cared for it, until lately. Well, shall I send your letters to my cousin Tyrone, and ask him to put any interpretation he likes on them?"

"You would not—you could not be guilty of such wickedness!"

"Could I not? I've grown selfish of late, and I could do pretty well anything. At all events I could do that. See what a tremble you are in already! Mrs. Lorn, I hold your fate in the hollow of my hand. I can crush you."

As he spoke the word he set his teeth together and clenched his hand as one who actually crushes something within it,

and looked at her with glittering and cruel eyes. She gazed at him for a moment, and then threw herself down, down on her very knees, and clasped his hand.

"Philip," she said, "you have conquered, you *have* crushed me! See how humble I am! Once you used to kneel to me. Look how I abase myself before you—I, who was always so proud. I have a son, Philip, a dear, darling son. For his sake I implore of you——"

"And you have a lover too," he coldly observed.

"I haven't! No, I haven't! I don't know whether he cares a straw about me, except as a friend."

"But you—you care about him a little more than as a friend."

"What if I do? Oh, shame to make a woman confess such things! What if I do? *You* don't care about me any more. You don't want me to marry you; you have told me that already."

"Quite true. I don't want to marry you, and I am not jealous any more. But I must see your whole heart. Mrs. Lorn, you must show me your whole purposes, every scrap! You must be open, very open, with me, and let me know all—everything. Come, then, you are really in love with my cousin? Speak out."

"I am," she murmured; and then, gaining courage, she rose to her feet, put back her hair, and took her seat again on the sofa. "I am in love with him. I'm not ashamed of it."

"This is not the first time," he began, with a smile.

"I think it is the first time. I know my own mind now. I am not a girl any more, to see a lover and a chivalrous hero in the first selfish egotist who chose to flatter me. You want me to confess all; very well, I came to London to get a husband with a title: that, and nothing else. Perhaps I could have done it too, but I fell in love with a man who has neither title nor money, and I would give my life for him. Now you know all. You will not harm me, Philip? Oh, if I once injured you, forgive me! I always trusted in your high and generous nature. I left you for your own sake, too—I did indeed! I saw in you a daring ambition and talent and energy, and I thought you ought to make a great way in the world. Even still—why not do so, even still? You are young yet. Let me help you. What good can we get from injuring each other?"

"None," he answered, composedly; "none whatever. I

don't want to injure you, Selina." For the first time he called her by her name. She caught his hand and pressed it warmly. "I will help you to marry your lover if I can."

She drew away her hand and put it to her eyes again.

"So," he said, "you are not ashamed to plan a thing; only ashamed to hear it spoken of aloud? You *do* want to marry him?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake, go on, and don't cross-examine me!"

"Well, it is for my interest that you should marry him. If he marries any time within the next fifteen years—and I suppose you hardly mean to defer the business so long—I come into the ownership of a hundred thousand pounds at least."

He told her in a few clear, dry words what we already know of the New York will, and she listened in wonder.

"I shall have other engines at work too—and I think I shall hit him, somehow."

"But you don't want to injure *him?*" she asked, in alarm.

"Oh no. Have no fear for *him:* his life's almost as precious to me as to you. If he dies without breaking any of the conditions the money doesn't go to me. It is only as a punishment in the event of forfeiture that he's to see the fortune that might have been his handed over to one who doesn't even bear the name. Now I am told he is a generous, thoughtless sort of fellow, who, if he really cares for a woman, will marry her right away, and you have money enough for both. *I* want money. I *have* some embers of ambition still burning in me, and I want a career. You must help me—you owe me that much."

"But how can I help you?"

"Simply by marrying *him.*"

"Oh, what a shame!" she murmured—"what a business to make of it!"

"That's all your affair, Mrs. Lorn. You have only in all this to please and serve yourself, and you will please and serve me. In a word, let us for the present be confederates."

"If you will have it——"

"I will. Strange, is it not, that you and I should be confederates? The unforeseen, you see, always comes to pass!"

"One word, Philip, and then I will ask you to go, for my son will be returning soon. How long have you been here, and how did you find me out?"

"I have been here some days, and it was the easiest thing in life to find out all about you and your movements."

"Did you come for this purpose only?"

"No, not for this only; I came partly for a purpose of which, perhaps, the world will hear something before long."

"Something dangerous. Ah, I know your old reckless ways."

"Dangerous; yes, perhaps so. But a good game if the fellows can only play it. No matter. I'll not tell you, Mrs. Lorn; it is no business for petticoats. But I, too, am going into society, Selina, and I want you to send me cards for some of your pleasant receptions; I am told they are rather brilliant things."

"Do *you* care for such a life as that?" she asked, distrustingly.

"Just now I do, and so I have made my formal call, Mrs. Lorn, and my address is the Langham Hotel. You will not grudge me an invitation?"

"Grudge you, Philip! Ah, if it will do you any pleasure, with what gladness I shall welcome you under my poor roof!"

Colonel Quentin was about to make his formal bow and withdraw when she spoke those words, and a sudden glitter came into his eyes. He stopped and, changing his demeanour of distant politeness at parting for a manner half familiar, half stern, he laid his hand on her shoulder and looked fixedly at her.

"Selina," he said, "you were always, from your childhood, a play-actress and a liar. You couldn't help deceiving. A thing which might be done in a plain, straightforward way you liked to do by some underhand and deceitful little trick. When I was most wild about you I knew this; but I couldn't help myself then; and I believed you had a generous heart, a loving heart. Well, I still think you have some generosity in you, and you are welcome to love, and win too, if you can. But you are unchanged in your old ways, and it still pleases you to tell lies. Very good. If it gives you any pleasure to talk lies to me, do so, I don't object. But understand that they don't deceive me; I know you perfectly well. Good morning."

He went out of the room before she could even ring the bell for a servant to open the door. As he went down the stairs, Master Theodore, bounding up, nearly ran into him.

"Halloa!" Colonel Quentin exclaimed, "is this the son? Let me look at you, my little man."

He took the indignant Theodore in his arms and lifted him into the air to a level with his own eyes and coolly studied his face. The situation was terrible for Theodore and his manly dignity. To submit calmly was to acknowledge himself a child; to struggle would have been yet more childlike and humbling. Colonel Quentin hardly seemed to notice the flush of anger, and, it must be owned—alas for Theodore's manhood!—the starting tears.

He set the boy down again.

"So you are Mrs. Lorn's son?" he asked.

"My name is Lorn," replied the indignant Theodore. "I haven't the pleasure of knowing your name, and I don't want to." He ran up the stairs all glowing and angry.

Colonel Quentin laughed and went his way.

"Mamma, who's that vulgar cad?" Theodore exclaimed, as he burst into his mother's room.

"Who, child?"

"That fellow I met on the stairs. A beastly vulgar fellow, I detest him! If I were big enough, wouldn't I kick him!"

"What has he said to you, my love?"

"Said? Oh, nothing; it isn't that. But a fellow don't like to be called 'little man' and lifted up in the air by a cad he never saw before. Let him try it on again—that's all!"

Mrs. Lorn evaded further inquiry for the moment by escaping to her bedroom. Indeed she was greatly disturbed and agitated by this unexpected meeting. For years she had not heard of Philip Quentin, and she had long given up thinking about him, taking it for granted that he was dead or had forgotten her. A less welcome visitor she could hardly have just now. She sat down before her glass and studied her looks. Her eyes were red and swimming in tears; her lips and hands were trembling, and Tyrone would soon be here.

"Oh!" she said to herself, passionately, and she clutched the ivory handle of her hairbrush as if it were a dagger, "how I should like to have killed him! I wish he were dead! Good God, to think that I once loved him, and thought him handsome and a gentleman! What a cruel, coarse wretch! I do believe he was chewing tobacco all the time; the very room smelt of filthy tobacco. And I am in the power of that man!"

She was fairly longing to relieve herself by the indulgence of a full outburst of tears; but she had no time for the luxury. Tyrone was coming soon.

Now it is certain that Tyrone never chewed tobacco; neither was Colonel Quentin indulging in that ungenteel and revolting habit when in Mrs. Lorn's drawing-room. That assertion of hers was but the wild outcry of feminine anger impotent of revenge. But it is probable that Colonel Quentin's clothes did smell of tobacco, for he was a great smoker. Let it be observed, however, that Mr. Tyrone likewise loved a cigar, and that Mrs. Lorn had more than once permitted, nay, encouraged and enjoined him, to smoke it in her presence, and even expressed a contempt for feebler-minded ladies whose nostrils and dignity could not endure the aroma of the weed. It may also be mentioned that in the old years Philip Quentin was likewise a great and persistent smoker, and Mrs. Lorn, then the love-sick Selina Saulsbury, had professed to derive joy from the fragrance of her soldier lover's cigar. The old, old difference between now and then!

*Then!* when young Philip Quentin, fresh from West Point and dreaming of a career, used to be stationed in the southern city of which Selina was a poetic belle, and he seemed to her the handsome, daring hero of her dreams—Djalma (by reason of his olive skin) and the Corsair and Henry Morton all in one, with a sweetly bewitching and terrible savour of Brian de Bois Guilbert thrown in! *Then!* when she fell madly in love with him and he with her, and they had secret walks together and reclined under trees and floated in boats, and kisses were ever so much plentier than blackberries; and, to do common justice to the man who afterwards gave himself up so much to the world, the flesh, and the devil, he might have married her, or done anything he pleased with her, but that he was heroically resolved to win his bride by making a name and a fortune and all the rest of it before he claimed so precious a creature for his own! *Then!* when she wrote the passionate, extravagant love letters, in which she often and often professed a devotion to her lover as wholesale, reckless, and scornful of all laws as Eloisa did! *Then!* when he, terribly in earnest, went away to do great things somehow in the great cities—the times were times of piping peace then in America, and the soldier had little chance of prevailing by the sword—and in absence his love burned more strongly than ever, and hers began to cool and cool, until, in the

gaieties of New York and Saratoga, it went out altogether, and she sold for money the pretty shrine in which the fire had once been burning—the sacred fire which had lost all its sanctity, the eternal fire which died so soon!

That was then; *now* had come up the very disagreeable and terrible ghost of this old dead love. Some women, when they have loved and now love not any longer or have changed to a new fancy, still hold tender and sacred the memory of their old passion, dig it a pretty little grave, and put a kindly monument over it with a gentle poetic inscription, and now and then, when they have a few moments quite to spare, will even pay it a visit and lay a little *immortelle* softly there, and say a peaceful word or two of remembrance or of prayer. But others, when they have done with the thing, never want to hear of it or see it any more. They would have it buried deep down in the bed of a river, like the corpse of the Gothic hero, or given to be entombed in the maws of kites, or flung into the dustheap, and finally swept away out of sight with the rest of the rubbish. Mrs. Lorn was a woman of the latter class. She had hoped never to see her old young lover any more, and behold! he had come to haunt her—a pitiless pursuer, who had her in his power, a slave transformed into a tyrant.

## CHAPTER VII.

Captain Felix Macan occupied a handsome little suite of apartments at the Langham Hotel, for which he paid a considerable price. Captain Macan is perhaps enough of a new type of character in the world's history to be worth a little description. He is tall, strong, coarsely built, and in his civilian dress of dark frock and grey trousers he is so evidently a soldier that one might almost call him too evidently a soldier to be quite natural. At least there is so much more of a loose-limbed swagger about him than we usually observe in British, French, or German officers that he occasionally suggests the idea of an actor who rather overdoes his part. But Captain Felix is not playing a part, so far, at least, as the soldiering is concerned. He has been in half a dozen pitched battles, and in engagements out of all number. His face strikes the observant gazer as something odd and altogether out of keeping. There are the thick

dark moustache, the look of reckless resolve that might become a brigand, and there are the merry, twinkling, bead-black eyes and the somewhat *retroussé* nose of the good-humoured and jovial Irishman. This is, in fact, the newest and most whimsical version of that type of being whereof the Dillons and Taaffes and O'Donnells were the more picturesque and dignified illustrations. This is the Irishman who has fought under a foreign flag. Substitute Fredericksburg for Fontenoy, and the conditions of a land without caste for those of an aristocratic monarchical system, and you begin to understand his existence. The Austrian, French, and Spanish services only offered a cordial welcome to the exiled Irish gentleman, but the war of the American Republic opened the ranks to everybody. Captain Felix Macan went out to New York a poor little emigrant boy, and for a long time hawked papers in the streets. He volunteered when the war broke out and got on in the service. Everybody liked him. He kept his fellows alive on the dreary bivouac nights by the songs—comic, warlike, and pathetic—which he would sing in his magnificent baritone voice. He never knew fatigue or sickness, and, with an absolute indifference to personal danger which sometimes looked almost like stupidity, he had the strange good luck never to get a wound of any abiding consequence.

Still Captain Macan could hardly have accumulated a fortune in the war. The pay of a captain in the regular army of the United States is not actual opulence. It may be set down, perhaps, at three hundred pounds a year. The most saving of men can hardly travel in Europe and spend a long time at the Langham Hotel out of that stipend. Moreover Captain Macan was never anything more than a volunteer, and, now that the war was over, was no more a captain in the strict sense than you or I. The title was now a purely honorary distinction. But if we come to honorary distinctions, Captain Macan could boast a higher rank. Among his friends in New York and in the bar-rooms of Fulton Street and Nassau Street he was known as General Macan, a rank which had never been conferred upon him by any of the military authorities of the United States. When travelling in England, however, he usually preferred to adopt the more modest title, thinking it would probably attract less attention. "Captain" is a good travelling name, but "General" is not—there are too few generals in any service, and people

are apt to make inquiries about them when they do travel. So Mr. Felix Macan remained a quiet captain at the Langham and paid his way right royally. For he had come to Europe on a mission, and those who made him a general found him the funds to pay his way.

"Captain" Macan in fact was an ex-volunteer in the service of the United States who had been mustered out when the rebellion was put down, and whose military career therefore might be regarded as complete; but "General" Macan was a Fenian commander whose career was only just going to begin. This was the time when Fenianism had high hopes. It had a local habitation, a state-house and military head-quarters all in one, somewhere near Union Square, the umbilicus of New York. The funds were flowing in plentifully, and the organizers of the movement were appointing Secretaries of State for the Home Department, Secretaries of State for the Foreign Department, Commanders of the Army of Irish Independence, the Army of the St. Lawrence, the Army of the Thames, and so on, as fast as you please. To a sublime intelligence they were probably not a whit more absurd than a mock English King at St. Germains in older days or a mock Neapolitan King in Rome more lately, making appointments to imaginary offices of State and giving away titles which the world would never acknowledge. Indeed, there was something far more substantial about some of the doings of the Fenian Council, for when they appointed General Macan to a mission of special service in England and Ireland they entrusted him with a handsome sum of money for the purpose. General Macan had been elected to this office by acclamation, it might be said. He was immensely popular because of his animal spirits, his reckless courage, his detestation of England, and his honesty. Honesty? Well, that does seem a strange word to use, but it has in this case a sort of meaning. Everybody knew that Macan, when he got hold of the money, would make what he would have called a little "splurge" in Europe—that he would drink more champagne and smoke more cigars than it would be proper to mention in the formal statement of accounts. But everybody knew that beyond this he would not embezzle the funds, and that he would do his best to give those who contributed some value for their expenditure in the shape of a Fenian rising somewhere. It was left to Macan's military and political judgment to find out where the rising ought to be, whether in

London, Glasgow, Wales, Tipperary, or the Isle of Man. Let one word be said in Macan's favour; while he profited gladly by the organization which enabled him to go to England in style instead of starting a newspaper stall or "running" a grog-shop in New York, he really had a genuine faith in the possibility of a grand Fenian rising somewhere: he had not yet decided where it was to be.

On the day of Colonel Quentin's visit to Mrs. Lorn Captain Macan had risen late. He had been amusing himself rather late the previous night. Before he had quite dressed he lighted a cigar and smoked complacently. He disdained breakfast, but he rang his bell and ordered "a bottle of Roederer and ice, ice, ice, right away!" When the wine was brought and uncorked he drank two foaming glasses of it and seemed to feel refreshed. Then he sat in one chair, put his feet on another, smoked, sipped, and was remarkably happy.

Captain Macan was engaged in trolling out some snatches of "The White Cockade" when his friend came in. He checked himself in his invitation to aspiring youths to "join the bold brigade and learn the soldier's glorious trade" when he noted the grim expression on the face of Colonel Quentin.

"Well, lad, you've been and done it, I guess. Seen the lady? Had it over, eh?"

"Yes, I've seen her."

"Don't say so! Well, I daresay 'twas touching. It's an awful trial, that first meeting with the old flame after she's gone and married the other fellow. That's a bad metaphor, Phil, for a flame doesn't get married, but I haven't anything better on hand. I make no doubt it'll do you well enough. What did she say?"

"Just what I expected. She tried to fool me all over again."

"And didn't succeed?"

"No."

"*Do* you tell me so? You held out?"

"I did."

"See that now! I couldn't have done it; I'd never have had the heart. Did she cry?"

"I think so."

"Well, I never could stand a woman's tears; I'd have sworn to anything she liked. But I hope you gave the poor thing back her letters?"

"No, I didn't. They are my weapons."

"Yes, but I don't like weapons against women. I think you're wrong, Phil; I told you so before. I'd never keep a woman's letters once she wanted them back."

"Macan, you are a good fellow, but you don't understand other people's feelings. You can't know what that woman made me suffer, and what degradation she drew me into to cure my rage and disappointment. You don't seem to understand that there is such a thing in the world as a feeling of revenge."

"Never felt a touch of the feeling in all my life; I mean towards anybody, any person. Of course, revenge on Old Mother England's a different thing; that's a holy duty, Quentin, my boy! But I couldn't feel it to man or woman. What does Byron say? 'Sweet is revenge, especially to women.' Yes, it's well enough for women; I don't mind it in *them*. I think I like to see a pretty little creature in a vixenish mood, but it don't suit a man at all, I think. Give it up, Phil."

"It would hardly give me up, Macan, if I were to try my very best. Besides, you must do me the favour to remember that just now I have something more substantial than even revenge to look after, and that she can help me. Do you suppose she would assist me out of love—out of old kindness?"

"Well, I don't know that she wouldn't. I fancy a woman is rather inclined to be generous to a fellow she has treated badly."

"Not this woman. She will serve me while I can compel her; and I had much rather compel her than beseech her."

"I don't seem to like it."

"Probably you couldn't do it, Macan. Perhaps if you had ever really suffered you could; perhaps you couldn't in any case. But, my good fellow, how does that affect *me?* I couldn't do what you are doing. I couldn't come to Europe and live like a prince here on the dollars subscribed by silly Irish helps and mad Irish waiters and barmen."

"I'll give them value for their money, Phil, you may depend on it! I'll wake up old Mother England! There'll be a fight where I go!"

"There generally is, I think. Nobody ever accused you of not liking a fight. You shall have my good wishes, I promise you. But you must do your preliminary work in your own

way—I couldn't for the life of me go into that sort of thing—and you must leave me to my work."

"All right, Phil; I'm not particular. 'John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave.' (This was a snatch of song.) Have a glass of champagne, won't you?"

"Thanks; no. I'll have a cigar, though."

"I can't keep from the champagne; it's so bully cheap. I say, think of that bottle of Roederer for two dollars-fifty! Why you wouldn't get it at Delmonico's for seven dollars! This London is a glorious place."

"It is; I'm tired of it already."

"By Jove, I think you're in love with that widow still! That must be it! 'Oh, love is the soul of—'" and again Captain Macan broke into song.

"How's your work getting on?" interrupted the other.

"We'll be soon full blast, sir. I must get hold of your friend and rival, Master Tyrone."

"I can bring that about. I don't suppose anything will come of it, but it's worth trying. It would suit us both if we could drag him in."

"Leave me alone for that! Ain't I an Arcadian, too, my boy? 'Who fears to speak of Ninety——'"

"Yes, but I think there are Arcadians and Arcadians. There are degrees in all professions, as the French judge said; and I fancy there was such a thing as class in Arcadia too. Tyrone is a gentleman, Macan, such as the old country only can breed. You can hardly talk him over in the same way as you would Mickey the hack-driver and Biddy the chambermaid."

"Blood's thicker than water, Phil! The seed of the old rebels is in that lad, you bet! Remember the civilized 'big Indian' we had with us out in the campaign of the Wilderness? There wasn't more dark colour in his hide than there is in yours! no, by George, nor half so much. He looked as good a soldier and as decent a lad as any of us, and there were three removes in his blood any way from his howling Indian progenitor. Very well, what did I see the devil do with my own eyes when we went under fire together one day? Bad luck to me if he didn't shriek out a war-whoop that would have done credit to Black Kettle himself, and if he hadn't a wounded Reb by the topknot going to scalp him! True as gospel, Phil! All right; you'll find it's the same thing with my bold Tyrone. Belgravia puts a coat of paint

on him, but there's the clear grit of the bully old Irish chief under all, you bet! 'Then up comes General Bonaparte and takes me by the hand——'" Captain Macan again gave full sway to his baritone voice.

"They tell me he's not good for anything but spending money and lounging round with young English lords," said Quentin, bitterly. "That, I suppose, is his charm in the eyes of—" and he stopped suddenly.

"Of course it is; to be sure it is. All women like aristocracy. Why shouldn't he spend money, even when it isn't his own? He wouldn't be a real Tyrone if he didn't. What are you smiling at? Oh, I see. You mean that other people who ain't real Tyrones can spend money that isn't their own? You get along; I scorn the insinuation! Ain't I going to pay for it every coin in a Frenchman's blood? I'm quoting, sir, from the noble words of Claude Melnotte, a hero you're not acquainted with, I'll be bound. And why shouldn't he keep company with English lords, if he can do so without demeaning himself? There never was a Tyrone yet that wasn't fit company for any prince of the blood royal."

Captain Macan poured himself out the last glass of champagne.

"How can you drink that stuff at this hour?" his friend asked.

"Well, it's so cheap here that I keep drinking it all the time, on the principle that makes some women buy up whole roomfuls of old furniture that they don't want, just because the things can be had a bargain. Besides, I'm fond of champagne, anyhow. It's the queen of wines, sir, and, as a republican, I am for putting down all royalties. You should have seen the waiter the other day at the Star and Garter when I insisted on beginning my dinner with champagne. 'Champagne with your soup, sir?' says he. 'Why not, sir?' says I. 'It isn't quite usual with *us*,' says he. 'It isn't quite usual with *me*,' says I, 'and that's just the very reason why I'm going to have it now, so you bring it along right away.' He did bring it, but with a look that told me he was acting under compulsion and that he entered his protest." And Macan laughed a great boyish horse-laugh.

"I wish I could get as much amusement out of life as you do," Colonel Quentin said, grimly.

"I wish you could. But you are too solemn; you don't see the fun of anything. Live while you may live! We're

alive to-day, Phil; I decline to answer for next week. If I were to be shot to-morrow, that's only the better reason for being pleasant to-night. That's philosophy."

"It's only temper and nerve, Macan."

"Devil may care what it is, so long as it keeps one's spirits up. Where are you going to-night?"

"Anywhere you like."

"I don't care for the opera. I like a ballad, but darn your Italian high style of thing. I'd like a real good deep tragedy now, something in the tremendous old Forrest style; but there's nothing of the kind here. Let's go and see something pleasant and bright, pretty faces and ankles and all that. Do you propose to dine here?"

"I don't care."

"I do. I hate the slow dinners here. There's nothing rattling and bachelor-like about them. I want to dine at Greenwich and eat clams—I mean whitebait—and do the regular thing. Wont you come? We'll get back in time to look into a theatre somewhere."

"Very well," said his friend, rising rather languidly, "I'll go with you."

"That's right. Where are you going now?"

"I have some letters to write."

"Oh, bad luck to them for letters, so have I! And devil a thing have I to say yet, except that everything looks splendid and that nothing mars the prospect of events; which is true enough as far as I have anything to say to it, for I haven't yet given the prospect any chance of marring itself in my eyes by taking a look at it. No matter; to-morrow I'll go to business in good earnest. Revolutions can't be made in a day, sir! I'll just lie down now and take a sleep, and think over it. Wont you call here for me at six?"

"Yes, I'll come."

Quentin went slowly out, and as he made for his room the notes of his friend's voice, uplifted in song, followed him for a good part of the way.

It was an odd caprice of inclination that made these two men comrades. Yet they had long been comrades, and even, in a certain sense, friends. Each was in his way unscrupulous, and on that basis, perhaps, the acquaintance first founded itself. War and imprisonment had flung them together, and the connexion survived in dissipation and in worldly schemes. Macan was a sort of person to whom any friend might confide

anything. If he liked you personally it did not matter what you had done. If you had robbed a bank or shot your cousin you might tell it to him safely, and, however he might disapprove of the deed, it affected his personal friendship no more than the regard of a schoolboy for his chum is affected by the latter's acknowledgment that he has plundered an orchard or exploded a cracker under his aunt's chair. Quentin's was a *carrière manquée*—he was a profoundly disappointed man, and the reckless good humour of his companion helped to amuse and distract him. Macan was the only person to whom Colonel Quentin could freely talk, and with whom also he could be silent when he pleased. Macan was never offended, never out of humour, and never gloomy. Thus his easy companionship suited one who, like De Musset's hero, was *débauché par ennui, mais triste par nature.*

## CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Tyrone lived on the second floor of a house in Clarges Street. The landlord of the house was legally M. Adolphe Pinel, but in fact and reality Madame Pinel, his wife. Madame Pinel was once Miss Johanna Malony, and was born under the shadow of that castle which has been already mentioned as, according to the "Parliamentary Companion," one of the residences of our hero. It was not an eligible residence at present, for it had not had a roof for generations, and a letter delivered there would have found only bats and crows, and perhaps a straggling pig or two, to dispute the honour of receiving it. During a long part of his minority Tyrone lived in the Faubourg St. Germain with a maiden aunt now dead, and this lady had, in one of her visits to Ireland, brought away smart and bright eyed little Johanna Malony to be her waiting maid. Adolphe Pinel was Tyrone's valet, and in the Faubourg St. Germain, when Johanna had grown to be a woman, Adolphe fell in love with her. Tyrone's aunt dying left Johanna a substantial legacy, and Johanna presently consented to become Madame Pinel. Soon after this Tyrone resolved to settle in London and look after Irish affairs, and become an Irish chief under modern conditions. Johanna, who was more attached to him than to anything in the world, except her husband and her children, in that absolutely pure and faithful way so well understood by the

followers of a great old Irish family, resolved that her husband and she would also come to London. Johanna's grand ambition, which entirely coincided with that of Adolphe, was to have a house in a fashionable quarter and to let lodgings there. She was intensely active, hardworking, and thrifty, while at the same time she dearly loved a position and a dignity. Now to be the mistress of a handsome house let off as well-paying lodgings would answer all her wishes. She could work and save, and yet be a ruling authority and have servants of her own. Then, too, Mr. Tyrone could lodge in her house, and she could see to his meals and Adolphe could look after his clothes and himself. This scheme Tyrone was glad to assist. When he was yet in the full flush of his money he advanced a thousand pounds for furniture, and the house in Clarges Street was taken. Tyrone only occupied a sitting-room and bedroom on the upper floor, and it was understood that the money he advanced was to be paid off whenever the growing profits of the concern should make it convenient.

Meanwhile the concern did prosper. M. Pinel made himself useful in a thousand ways. Tyrone had now long ceased to keep a valet, and Madame Pinel was an invaluable landlady, with a perfect genius for the management of servants. One principle she asserted and maintained with a candour and directness rarely known in household affairs. She laid down from the first the doctrine that she was to be the absolute ruler. M. Pinel was very good, she said, for executing orders, but he had not the head for actual command and management. So she good humouredly gave him to understand that the house could never do with divided authority; that in all things, small and large, there must be only one will and one law, and that these must be hers. On this she was firm, nor would she allow M. Pinel or anybody else to dispute for one moment her rightful authority. Adolphe, for his part, was well contented. He had a fond and faithful wife, he was delighted to carry out her plans and orders, and he never dreamed of rebelling. It was not merely the pardonable and feminine desire to have her own way that animated Johanna. She saw that she could manage matters best, and she was resolved that she would manage them. But it would never have suited her part to be like Pope's model wife, who, if she rules her husband, "never shows she rules." It was essential to Madame Pinel's success that her rule should be

open and acknowledged. M. Pinel was rather fond of meddling and making, and could be turned to good account as a minister obeying orders, but would make a sad muddle if he took things into his own hands. He was rather easy, too, and might be talked over; he did not understand half the English that was spoken to him, and yet he would not own his imperfection. There was no knowing what abatement lodgers might obtain, what breaches of discipline servants, coachmen, brougham-drivers (from the livery stables) might be encouraged to commit if it were not distinctly known to everybody that Madame Pinel was the master, and that M. Pinel had no authority of his own to do anything. Therefore, for M. Pinel's own good, it was absolutely essential not merely that he should obey, but that he should do public homage in acknowledgment of his subjection.

Madame Johanna, who was the kindest creature in the world and who loved her husband (although with a certain secret pity for him as a foreigner and a Frenchman), was as particular about her authority as Dr. Busby himself when he kept his hat on in presence of the King, on the ground that if his pupils supposed anybody in the world to be greater than their master all his power over them would be gone. It happened that on one occasion, Johanna being out, a lady and gentleman highly recommended had come to look for lodgings. A new servant ignorantly summoned M. Pinel, who at once proceeded rather rashly to enter into terms. Madame Pinel returned and heard of what was going on. She saw that if once such a precedent were established her authority would be nowhere. She entered the parlour where the lady and gentleman were talking over the arrangements with the bowing and smiling Adolphe. She was equal to the situation. "We have been making arrangements with M. Pinel," said the gentleman, politely. "Not M. Pinel, but Madame Pinel," said Johanna, good humouredly but firmly, "makes the arrangements here. Now, Adolphe, you can go, dear, and I'll settle with the lady and gentleman." Nothing on earth could have made Johanna accept the proposals of that lady and gentleman. She broke off the negotiations, civilly but without much delay, and her position in the eyes of the household was reasserted.

Once, and once only, Madame saw M. Pinel a little too civil and gallant in manner to a remarkably pretty parlour-maid. Johanna did not suspect her husband of anything

more than a rather florid civility; but the other servants did not quite understand French gallantry, perhaps, and Johanna thought she saw a significant glance now and then passing between them, and she fancied there was an occasional saucy gleam in the eye of the supposed favourite. Here again she quickly rose to the level of the situation. She summoned the girl to her room, paid her a month's wages in advance, wrote her a character such as her capacity and honesty fairly deserved, and had her out of the house in ten minutes. Adolphe was utterly paralysed by this decisive energy. She did not scold him; only remarked, "Voilà, Adolphe, vos attentions ont coûté cette pauvre fille sa situation,"—for Johanna's French was the oddest metamorphosis of bad English, though she generally contrived to make her meaning pretty clear one way or another. Adolphe for the future preserved a staid and dignified coldness in his dealings with the maids.

Johanna watched over Tyrone's career and his goings on with alternate hope and fear. She was as familiar with him as if he had been her brother, as full of respect and veneration as though he were a sovereign prince. She would knock at his door, come in and remonstrate with him, or advise him, or encourage him, as freely and earnestly as if she were his mother, and she was really only four or five years older than himself. Even M. Pinel, Frenchman though he was, never thought of jealousy or suspicion in such a frank, honest, and devoted attachment.

When Tyrone rose every morning he always found piles of letters and papers to read; and his breakfast was generally a sort of reception of all manner of visitors, political and personal—constituents with a grievance, *protégés* of constituents wanting situations in the Custom House, the Inland Revenue, the Post-office, the police, and what not; Irishmen out of work who sought a little help; young Irishmen of unappreciated genius who desired, through his means, an immediate engagement on some first-class newspaper; and sometimes Irishwomen, who were not slow to ask for his intervention on behalf of their husbands and sons. It was utterly useless for Tyrone to protest to each and everybody that he could not ask favours of the Government and that he had no influence whatever with the press. No Irishman or woman of the place-seeking class ever yet believed that there was any favour beyond the power of the Member to obtain;

and Tyrone, moreover, had gone in for playing the superb part of an Irish chief.

Therefore, when Tyrone wanted to get any letters written or work of any kind done in the morning he rose very early, before the visitations had set in. One morning, soon after he had first seen Jennie at the House, he got up early for this purpose. Early as he was, however, he had been anticipated. He had hardly sat down to write when he heard the well-known tap of Madame Pinel. Tyrone was always "at home" to her knock; he had quite a warm regard for the good woman, and often made himself a merry playfellow for her children. Most people thought him self-conceited and proud. Johanna's children, from the baby up, adored him, and would make as free with him as with papa.

So Tyrone, without looking up, called out "Come in, Johanna," and Johanna entered. She was a bright-eyed, dark-skinned western peasant girl converted into a sort of lady. She had a supple, vigorous form now—indeed growing rather plump and maternal—and the firm step which she had acquired bare-legged among her native bogs and hills. She had a large mouth and white shining teeth, and she was dressed in a buff morning gown with a solid brooch and a thick gold chain, as became the landlady of so respectable, and even fashionable, an establishment.

"Good morning, Tyrone" (Johanna always called her chief "Tyrone"—the Tyrone, the one Tyrone; that was his highest honour at home, to be Tyrone; the poorest beggar thus accosted him). "Maybe I'm disturbing you?"

"Not at all, Johanna. What is it?"

"Well, it's this: there's been a strange sort of woman this morning looking for you."

"So early—already?"

"Ay, sure; and she seems in trouble, and she begs and prays to see you. They told her you weren't up, but that didn't satisfy her; she says she'll come again."

Johanna paused, watching Tyrone with uneasy eyes.

"What a nuisance!" Then he suddenly thought of his Westminster Hall petitioner. "What kind of a woman is she, Johanna? Tall, pale, and thin?"

"Yes, very thin and pale, and strange like. Poor thing, like a lady too."

Tyrone heaved a sigh of resignation. "I suppose I must see her, Johanna."

"I suppose so. Now look here, Tyrone, there isn't anything wrong in this? I wouldn't believe it of you. Tell me, dear, there isn't anything wrong?"

"Anything wrong, Johanna? How wrong?"

"This poor creature, with her eyes full of tears and her faded gown, God help her! she hasn't any claim on you? Oh, sure, you know what I mean, but I'll put it plainer if you like."

"No, Johanna," said Tyrone, gravely, although a good deal inclined to smile, "she has no claim on me but the same that she has on you."

"Thank God for that same! And I knew it, too, only one gets uneasy in a place like this."

"I never saw her until the other night." And then Tyrone gave Johanna a brief account of his adventure, to which she listened with wondering eyes and exclamations of "See that, now!" and "The creature," and little clucking sounds expressive of sympathy and pity. The pity, of course, was profoundly increased when Tyrone spoke of the little child, which at first he forgot to do.

"But I don't see what I can do for her," said Tyrone, rising and walking impatiently up and down the room, striving as he did to harden himself into firmness; "I am so very hard up, and there are so many of these poor people."

"The poor we shall have always with us," said Johanna, in a tone of remonstrance.

"I suppose so—from Ireland at least," Tyrone replied He sometimes amused himself by railing at Ireland in order to draw out Johanna, who fired at a disparaging word from any one else, even from him, but reserved to herself the right to sermonize over the laziness of her countrymen and countrywomen whenever occasion offered to read them a lesson which she supposed might have a stimulating effect.

"Fie for shame now, Tyrone! Is it to abuse our own flesh and blood you would? There's enough ready to do that without our doing it for them."

"Well, Johanna, it's only to you, of course."

"I don't know; when one gets the way of it one might be letting out before strangers. But about this poor creature—will you see her?"

"Wouldn't it do for you to see her, Johanna, if you would be kind enough? You know all about my finances"—by the way, she didn't know of the recent sale of his relics—"I

haven't any money really to give away. You might be able to give her some advice. I'm afraid the poor fellow her husband is dying; I thought so the other night."

"I'll see her if you like, to be sure, but she'll not be satisfied with *that*;" and Johanna shook her head despondingly.

"Wont she?"

"She wont, depend upon it. She'll think she can get more good by talking over a man than a woman. There's a ring at the door; that's she again, I'm sure. Faith, she rings as if she was coming to wake up the parish doctor," Johanna added, her sympathy a little disturbed by what she considered the too imperious tone of the summons. Madame Pinel hurried out of the room. Tyrone remained standing near the chimneypiece, his elbow leaning on it, in dangerous proximity to the Ariadne on her tiger, which, carefully covered with a glass shade, had been set up by Madame Pinel as its special ornament. Madame Pinel attended sales, and bought up things "graduously," she said. Tyrone did not think of resuming his letter-writing. He knew what would be the result of the conference below stairs, and that he would have to see his visitor. Besides, there was a strange sensation in his mind, telling him that something not common was to come of this visit.

In a moment Madame Pinel herself showed the visitor up, gave a glance of wonder and pity blended, which Tyrone caught, and then left the room. The visitor came towards Tyrone with eager step. She was dressed in a faded gown, as Johanna had said—a very, very faded gown; her face was pale, looking almost yellow in the sunny daylight, and wasted; but her forehead was intellectual, her eyebrows were beautifully drawn. All the outlines of the face were clear and striking; but the lips were thin, and there were quivering, twinkling lines around the eyes and mouth—lines that made one thrill as if with a shooting pain.

Tyrone bowed, and handed her a chair.

"No, no," she said, in her clear voice, a little sharp in tone, and now trembling with emotion, "I don't care to sit down; I haven't long to stay. I told you I would only seek you out if the worst came. Well, you see me—the worst *has* come."

"I feared it was coming," Tyrone said, gently.

"You did! I didn't! I thought it couldn't be; we had been together so long, and suffered so much. I thought I could have held him for ever. Well, I couldn't."

"Is he—is it all over?"

"No, he is not dead." A cruel spasm passed across her face. "He cannot die in peace, thinking of his child—and of me! Oh, Tyrone, I don't care for myself, nor much even for her *now*, but I want you to come and speak to him and ease his mind, and tell him you will not let his child starve!"

In all his genuine pity for the woman, Tyrone could not keep a look of surprise from crossing his face. She saw it.

"Yes," she said, bitterly, "you wonder at my coolness, don't you? What's the dying pauper's child to the great Tyrone? What claim has he or she on you? I'll tell you; I don't care *now* even if he knows that I have told you. He and she have this claim on you, that you stand between them and the money that ought to be theirs. Yes, you do, you may well look amazed! One of these days you will be squandering the wealth that by every law of God and nature, if there are such things, belongs to him and to his child!"

"What do you mean; who are you; what is his name?"

"His name? Your name! Maurice Tyrone is his name; ay, and he was the noblest creature that ever bore the name, worth ten thousand such as you. He might have done it honour, while you—well, no matter, I go mad when I think of these things. Now you know our claim."

"I guess it partly: if this is so——"

"If this is so? I tell you it is so. He is as surely the son of old Maurice Tyrone of New York as you are standing there. Do you want proofs? Come with me and you shall have them. We have destroyed him between us, Tyrone," she said, with a wild smile, "I, because I loved him; you, because his foolish old father thought there was some promise in you that might do honour to the name. Come, shall we go and look at our work side by side?"

"If this is so," said Tyrone, now deeply moved, "I can only say that your own child is not more innocent of any share in the disinheriting of your husband than I am. His father never even saw me. I never knew anything about him until I heard of his death——"

"No; but then? When you knew he had a son who was to be plundered to enrich *you*, you took great pains, I suppose, to find him out, and to know whether he deserved to be cast off or whether he didn't? Yes, you thought of all this, I suppose?"

"I thought very little about it," said Tyrone, sadly. "I

am afraid I thought too little about most things. I hardly gave many serious thoughts to this money, which is only to come to me if all manner of conditions are fulfilled. But now, if this is so—I mean since this is so, and you are the wife of my cousin, and I have been, in some sort, the innocent cause of his losing his father's property, the only question is, what can I do? I admit your claim freely. Your child shall not want, nor you either, while I have a sovereign or a roof over me. But now for the moment——?"

"For the moment, Tyrone, I only ask you to do what you did before when you knew nothing of us, to come and see *him* before it is too late. If there is yet time, I shall have to ask you one favour then—not much, and not for myself. Come, we have talked too long, and wasted much time."

With something of that imperious air which he had already observed, and which made her poor clothing seem like a disguise, the woman signified that they must come away. Tyrone took his hat and accompanied her downstairs. A hansom was passing, he hailed it, assisted his companion, who had now dropped her veil, to get in, and they drove away.

Tyrone found a sick man wasting away into hopeless death. He heard some things that gave him a subject for sober and serious thought. He overruled the caprice alike of the dying man and the half-distracted woman, and brought a doctor to the miserable house. He left the house, promising to return next morning; and he brought away with him the quiet little child whom he gave into the care of the wondering and sympathetic Johanna. This was the one favour asked by his cousin's wife—that if the child was to be an orphan she might not know it yet.

## CHAPTER IX.

It will be easily believed that Tyrone was not in much mood for what is called social enjoyment that day. But he had a little penance of that kind to endure against which for many reasons his soul felt inclined to rebel. He had invited Theodore Lorn to dine with him at Greenwich that very day, and when Theodore's mother heard of the invitation she had declared, with beseeching eyes, that she would like *so* much to be invited too. She insisted that nothing would

delight her so much as to dine with Mr. Tyrone and her son at Greenwich. Mrs. Lorn always employed to the full the privilege which her widowhood, her wealth, her thirty odd years, her beauty, and her traditional family respectability, gave her, of saying and doing what she liked. Therefore instead of plotting to bring about a tête-à-tête or something nearly as good with Tyrone, she boldly seized on the opportunity of his invitation to her boy, and insisted that she must be invited too.

At first Tyrone was very glad of her whim, and welcomed eagerly the chance of indulging it. He owed her much hospitality; she was a very agreeable companion; and he had just got his three hundred pounds "in crisp bank-notes," as Thackeray would have said, from Mr. Aspar, when he gave the invitation. He was very glad therefore to play the host to a pretty woman, and only wished in his heart that Jennie Aspar could be of the party. But in the time between the invitation and the dinner came the scenes that have just been described. He had been brought into close companionship with sorrow and death, with a strange story which seemed strangely destined to weave itself into the chapter of his own life; he had become the depository of a sad and solemn secret; he had taken on himself a soberizing responsibility; he would soon have doubtless to stand beside a grave. All this filled him with gloomy thoughts and forebodings, and the gaiety of a dinner, the possibility of being provoked into a semi-flirtation with Mrs. Lorn, seemed a ghastly outrage upon the associations of the hour. It was now, however, too late to think of all this. He had to play the courteous and genial host, and he tried his very best to bring himself up to the mark.

The dinner was over. Mrs. Lorn had drawn her chair to the open window of the hotel-room, and was gazing at the water. Tyrone sat near her. Theodore had fixed his chair in the balcony, and was amusing himself by watching the steamers and the crowds and the mudlarks, while he devoured almonds and raisins by handfuls. The scene was as picturesque as it ever could be. A merciful dispensation of Providence enables people who live in London to think Greenwich a beautiful place. They gaze upon a mudbank, and are content to believe it equal to the yellow sands of Ariel. They have farther off a prospect of a low-lying, decaying shore, adorned with rickety buildings, vegetating old boats, and

rotting wharves, and they say, "How charming!" and if the moon can anywhere be seen ladies grow sentimental.

Mrs. Lorn had said, "How charming!" many times already. The moon was not yet rising, in fact, the sun had not set; for Mrs. Lorn had stipulated for a very, very early dinner, a sort of luncheon delayed, because of the necessity of returning home in good time on account of the night air and Theodore's cold. But Mrs. Lorn was growing sentimental without the moon; and she longed for some responsive utterance or glance from her companion. Mr. Tyrone, however, was particularly unresponsive and unemotional. He had not been, she saw, in his usual spirits all the day.

Mrs. Lorn turned away from the enchanting prospect and looked thoughtfully at him. Then she touched his hand ever so lightly and gently with hers.

"You are depressed to-day; you are not well. I ought not to have allowed you to come here."

"Pray don't think so, I am perfectly well."

"Then you find your company dull, I fear."

Tyrone smiled.

"Come," he said, "that is proclaiming me stupid with a vengeance; I am sure I deserve it, and you have been very patient with me."

"Why put on any pretence with me?"

He looked up surprised.

"Yes, any pretence. Do you think I can't see that something is wrong with you? Do you think a woman has no eyes?"

The man must have been blind indeed who, in Tyrone's place, did not see that Mrs. Lorn had eyes. She turned their deep dark light tenderly upon the young man's face, and he could not but look with interest and admiration into their luminous depths, where sympathy itself seemed to radiate upon him.

"Come," she said, "my friend, *be* a friend with *me*. When I see that something weighs heavily on your mind, I can't keep myself from offering you sympathy. Don't be offended or think me too inquisitive. I am not an Englishwoman—cold, sedate, and regular. The glow of a southern climate is in me, and I must speak out. Treat me as a friend, think of me as Theodore Lorn. I am not a girl, I am ever so much older than you, I dare say. Let me have the one only advantage that years can ever give a woman, the advantage

of inviting, without misconstruction, the confidence of a man."

"My dear Mrs. Lorn, you are very kind, and——"

"Now, please don't talk any platitudes or meaningless compliments. If you don't think it right to share any confidence with me, say so frankly, and I shan't be offended. Tell me people don't do that sort of thing in England unless—unless they stand in very different relationship. I mean that English customs don't acknowledge the possibility of friendship between man and woman. Tell me all that if you like, and I will submit. But don't try to put me off with commonplaces."

"Well, Mrs. Lorn, you are too kind and good a friend to be put off with evasions of any sort, and what would be the use? You have guessed pretty rightly. I do feel depressed even here with you"—he hurried rather over this poor little phrase of compliment.

"Of course—I knew it. I saw that something was on your mind, just as I should see—well, that Theodore was pale, or anything of that kind. Now, I want you to go a step farther, and tell me what it is that depresses you."

"What *it* is?" Tyrone said, with a bitter little laugh.

"What the causes are, then."

"Causes enough! Ever so many! Look here, Mrs. Lorn, you are the only woman I could talk to in this kind of way. I am growing utterly ashamed of myself. I have been leading the most idle and wretched existence, and now that the silly game on which I entered is prematurely played out, I haven't even the spirit to confess my utter failure and have done with it."

"What is your failure," she asked gently; "what have you done that is so terrible, so irretrievable? I suppose I can guess at part of it. You have spent a great deal of money, probably. Many young men do that. Perhaps you have been a little wild and foolish. I am not a child; I know the realities of life. Well, I don't see anything very dreadful in all that."

He shook his head.

"Well, grant that you have wasted all your fortune; I may perhaps venture on guessing that much——"

"Guessing it! There isn't a cabman in Palace Yard who doesn't know it!"

"Let it be so. Young men of family not uncommonly squander a fortune in England, I believe, before they begin the career that is to be the real business of their lives."

"What career is open to me? I am ashamed to hang on to the House of Commons, and be looked on as a broken-down fellow who has to live in a garret somewhere, in order that he may be able to pay for a pair of gloves and a hansom every now and then. I have been brought up to nothing—I am good for nothing. I have thought of going to the bar, but I should be doomed to inevitable brieflessness, I know. I can't write for the papers; and even if I could, I can't write the sort of opinions that would suit them. I have thought of trying to take service in the French army or the Austrian, as many of my people did before me, only even there the ill-luck of my opinions pursues me, for I go for freedom everywhere. And I couldn't serve under the Emperor Napoleon: and I couldn't have served against a Venetian rebellion! Besides, my own people, my own Irish constituents—you don't understand these things, though."

"Yes, I do. Do you think I have not read your speeches, and followed your political career? Your constituency is the place you represent in Parliament."

"The place I don't represent in Parliament rather! Very well. These poor people—some of them engaged in a perpetual civil war for bare life against their landlords—made all sorts of sacrifices to secure my return to Parliament. They had faith in me because of my name: they took me utterly untried. They risked everything the landlord, the agent, and the police could do: they rejected bribes and laughed at threats, and they sent me into the House—to represent their cause! What have I done for them? Fooled away their time, and their chances, and their cause, and all the rest of it; and now, even *they* are beginning to find me out." He spoke in quick excited words, and closed with a gesture as if of despair.

"This is not good," Mrs. Lorn said, slowly, after a moment's pause; "but it is not irretrievable. Oh, far from it! You have only to knit together the broken threads of your life, and weave a new career out of them. You are only on the threshold of your existence. Is this all?"

"All? Isn't that enough?"

"Enough to make you regret, but not enough to make any friend of yours despair. Now, might I speak a word—as a friend? Believe me, Mr. Tyrone, you may have many wiser and more powerful friends, but you have none in the world sincerer than I am."

Theodore burst in and interrupted them for a moment:

"How you two do talk politics," he exclaimed. "Mamma is death on politics, Tyrone. I like 'em too, but it's ever so much jollier now to sit out on the balcony and see all the people. I've seen no end of fellows whom I know. It's here the whitebait dinner is—the Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer, and all that lot. I say, Tyrone, when are you going to be in the Government?"

He did not wait for an answer, however, but returned to his balcony.

Mrs. Lorn renewed the conversation, which perhaps Tyrone would now have avoided if he could. He dreaded the offer of a helping hand, which he knew was coming.

"If I were a man," she began, with just a little sigh, "how readily you would admit me into your plans and councils! And I too sympathize with your cause—the cause of your country—so deeply!" She did certainly look sympathetic, for she identified the cause with the man, but no mudlark on the strand below had less notion of what the cause might be and how and all about it. "Since I was a girl I have loved Ireland and would have served her. I believe there's Irish blood in our family, on my mother's side"—this was struck off on the spur of the moment—"why may I not do something for the cause which you represent?"

Tyrone was about to rise, when she laid her hand gently on his arm.

"You wont resent my offer?" she said, plaintively; "the offer of a friend who sees that his comrade has had ill luck at the game of rouge et noir, and simply offers him a share of his purse?"

The blood rushed into Tyrone's face.

"No, no, Mrs. Lorn! Thank you ten thousand times, but it can't be. It is impossible."

"Why impossible? If I were a man, your friend, surely you would not revolt at the thought of borrowing a few hundreds or thousands until your affairs came right, as they will, I know. You shall pay it all back: if you like, I'll charge you ever so much per cent. interest. Forget, for the moment, my wretched sex and let me give a helping hand to my friend and his cause. Mr. Tyrone, I have literally more money than I know what to do with. There is only one pleasure on earth, except what I can do for my darling Theodore, that it could procure me—the pleasure of doing

*you* some little service. Will you refuse that pleasure to a friend who loves you as a brother?"

There was so much of earnest frankness in her manner, such a simple womanly friendship in her tone, such an absence of all apparent coquetry or egotism, that the heart of the young man was profoundly touched. On that side was all the world—selfish, heartless, cynical—contemplating his ruin and his shame; on this side the one true friend who offered rescue and redemption. He had, then, a friend, and it was a woman! To do Tyrone justice he never for a second entertained the thought of accepting the offer. Pride, prejudice, conventionality, manhood utterly forbade *that*. But he was deeply moved. The manner in which Mrs. Lorn had avowed the warmth of her friendship seemed the very inspiration of womanly delicacy itself; for it appeared as if intended to assure him that only friendship could exist between them. What words the warmth of Tyrone's impetuous thankfulness might have uttered, and what they might have led to, Mrs. Lorn was not destined to know, for just at that moment Theodore burst in again.

"Oh, I say, Tyrone, you must come here for a moment. Here's Cadsby, and two such stunning girls! I want you to tell me their names."

He dragged his mamma to the balcony. Tyrone followed. An open carriage came along with the Hon. Captain Cadsby seated on the box. In the carriage, on the back seat, were Mrs. Granger and Alicia Aspar, the latter looking very handsome. Tyrone saluted the ladies. But as the carriage passed there looked up at him from the front seat the face of a girl with bright soft eyes, which fixed themselves for one moment on his and then drooped, not before they had sent him a kindly greeting. A faint colour tinted the face of the girl as she looked down. How unspeakably sweet and fresh, how bright and innocent and beautiful, she was when those eyes rested for a moment on Tyrone! He thought the air vibrated once more with the tremor of her harp-strings. He saw that Mrs. Lorn was looking at him anxiously with surprise on her face, and he became master of himself again—and the moment was gone!

"Ain't those two stunning girls!" exclaimed Theodore. "I wonder where Cadsby got hold of them."

"I do wish you wouldn't use such language, Theodore, my love," said his mamma, with some little acerbity in the tone

of her voice. "They are handsome girls, especially the girl who looked up at you, Mr. Tyrone. Who are they?"

"They are nieces of a Mrs. Granger, of Denzill Street," said Tyrone, sullenly, or in a tone as near to sullenness as he could ever get. He did not like to see Jennie in the company of the Hon. Captain Cadsby, and he had not the courage to mention her name lest Mrs. Lorn should know anything of her father and make comment thereon. Even his burst of genuine gratitude did not prevent him from thinking that Mrs. Lorn seemed somewhat artificial.

"How she looked at you, Mr. Tyrone! Ah! I am afraid you really are dreadfully bad!"

Tyrone could not help saying, "If that young lady thought me so, Mrs. Lorn, she would never have given me such a kindly smile. I have not known her much, but she's at least as pure and good as she is pretty."

"I like her," said Theodore, flatly. "She is a bully girl, I think."

"Mr. Tyrone doesn't know, I daresay, what a bully girl is, Theodore. I hope he doesn't, I am sure."

"Oh, don't he though? Haven't I initiated him? 'Bully's' only American for 'stunning,' mamma. It's classic; Juno had ox-eyes, you know. That comes very near to being a bully girl, don't it?"

Mrs. Lorn was vexed, but resolved not to show her vexation any farther. She was much too clever to think anything could be done by disparagement of Jennie. But the contretemps was cruel. She knew that some burst of gratitude was on Tyrone's lips at the very moment of the unfortunate interruption; perhaps she thought it might have gone farther than a mere avowal of gratitude. Anyhow, the girl in the carriage had killed that chance and Mrs. Lorn hated her, although she did not really suppose that Tyrone thought of her more than as a mere acquaintance. Mrs. Lorn was not very clever in reading through the faces of men. Few women are, unless when the faces express emotion awakened by those very women themselves. It requires the instinct of genius for one sex to read below the surface in the face of the other. But the glance in Jennie's eyes and the sudden droop of Jennie's head she understood much better than Tyrone did. Had the little maiden's heart been bare to her scrutiny she could not have learned any more than she did. "That girl is in love with him," she said to herself, and she detested "that girl."

But a worse contretemps was still in store. As Tyrone remained in the balcony she remained too, looking blankly down into the dusty road.

"I say, mamma," called out Theodore, "see those fellows coming across? One of them's the cad that came to see you the other day. Oh! hang it all, he sees us. Like his impudence!"

Two men were crossing the road, one of whom had already taken off his hat to Mrs. Lorn and was evidently waiting for some token of recognition on her part. Her dark face grew red, but she leaned from the balcony and seemed positively effusive in her friendly greetings.

"An old friend, a very old friend, Mr. Tyrone," she said, in rapid explanation. "I'll tell you all about him. May I ask him up? Oh pray do let me ask him up?"

Her expression and her words were so imploring, and her acquaintance beneath was so evidently determined to be invited up, that Tyrone could only ring the bell and tell a waiter to convey Mrs. Lorn's invitation to the stranger. But Tyrone looked with amazement, and perhaps a sort of disgust, at the odd pair below. They were both dressed in the loudest conceivable style. One—with a short nose and a merry eye—had a crimson necktie, a white hat, and bright green gloves, and he carried a riding-whip with a huge silver handle in his hand, and he wore two gold chains. Mrs. Lorn's friend, a dark and saturnine man, bowed to her; his companion bowed to everybody in general.

The waiter presently ushered the strangers in. Tyrone drew into the background. Mrs. Lorn hastened to welcome her friend.

"My dear Colonel Quentin, how delighted I am to see you! What a long time since we last met! What an unexpected pleasure! And this gentleman—have I the pleasure of knowing him? Major—" and she paused inquiringly, assuming that it was safe enough to guess at a military title of some kind.

"General Macan, madam—Brigadier-General Macan," said the hero himself—"always at your service and delighted to have the honour of being presented to you."

Mrs. Lorn seemed anxious to allow as little time as possible for speech. She hastened to present her acquaintances to Tyrone.

"Mr. Tyrone—where's Mr. Tyrone?—oh, yes, you will

allow me, I am sure, to introduce a distinguished fellow-countryman and very old friend of mine, Colonel Quentin, of the United States Army."

Tyrone bowed very coldly. So did Colonel Quentin. Neither spoke.

"And his friend General—General——"

"Macan, madam. Delighted to know you, Colonel Tyrone."

"My name is Tyrone," said our hero. "I am not in the Army."

"No more you are! To be sure you aren't. How could I think of such a thing? A Tyrone in the British Army would be an anomaly, wouldn't it? I was thinking of our own land across the water, where we're all free alike and we're fond of our military titles."

"Theodore, my love, why don't you speak to Colonel Quentin?"

"I haven't yet had the pleasure of an introduction, mamma," and Theodore coolly sauntered into the balcony, denying himself the pleasure.

"Your son's a pretty boy," said Quentin, "and full of humours already."

"Pray be seated, gentlemen," said Mrs. Lorn, who was in positive agony, distraught between the horrible necessity of conciliating Quentin and the terrible dread of disgusting Tyrone. She stole imploring glances under her eyes at each in turn. Quentin evidently enjoyed her perplexity.

"Mr. Tyrone, I am sure, will allow me to ask you to take seats and remain a few minutes."

"Mr. Tyrone, ma'am," said the good-natured General Macan, "is hospitality itself. I'll be bound you need only mention his grand old name to tell us that. There never was yet a Tyrone, madam, that wasn't a prince in nature as well as in name. We know him as well out in the States as you do here; some of us better, bedad, we who hail from the old land like myself!"

This was taking Tyrone a little on his weak side. A genuine Irishman finds it as hard to resist a compliment on his birth and his hospitality, as a woman does upon her beauty and her taste in dress. Macan had, in fact, made a sort of appeal which to Tyrone was almost as sacred as the mediæval privilege of sanctuary.

"I am glad to meet a countryman, and especially one from

the United States, the new home of our people," he said. "Pray do me the favour to be seated, Mr.—I mean General Macan, and you, sir, as well; friends of Mrs. Lorn's must always be welcome to me."

"Come now, that's real kind," the complacent Macan observed. "It's a sacrifice that we oughtn't to impose, interrupting Mr. Tyrone in such companionship." He made a gallant bow to Mrs. Lorn. "Now, Mr. Tyrone, you'll permit me, wont you, just to order up a bottle or two of the best Clicquot they've got in the house, to celebrate this pleasant meeting. 'And doth not a meeting like this make amends?'" Trolling forth the notes of an exquisite air he actually rose to ring the bell. Tyrone grew positively red with anger, and as, like many other persons of generous nature and habitually sweet temper, he was sometimes liable to a sudden outbreak of vehement passion, it seemed likely that the joy of the meeting would have been a little disturbed.

Colonel Quentin promptly interfered.

"Let me apologize for my friend, Mr. Tyrone;" and he laid his hand upon the arm of the genial Macan, who was serenely unconscious of the sensation he had created. "General Macan is an entire stranger to the ways of European society, and never was much given to society anywhere. His social habits were formed round the camp-fire, where anyone who could contribute even a bottle of Bourbon was a benefactor to his fellows and needed no other passport. Pray excuse him; and still more let me beg of you to excuse *me* for our intrusion, of which I alone am the cause."

"So I've been doing something wrong?" said the cheery Macan. "Ten thousand apologies, Mr. Tyrone; I only meant good-fellowship. Ways of society? Where could I learn the ways of society? I went out to New York a ragged little boy—driven out by the Saxon robbers and their laws, madam, and that's the truth of it—and I fought my way up, and I carried the green flag at Fredericksburg. Anyhow the Macans weren't like the Tyrones. They were the chiefs, and we were only too proud to be the followers. Give us your hand, Tyrone; sure to put 'Mister' to such a name ought to be a misdemeanour! I ask your pardon with all my heart."

Tyrone was easily appeased by an apology which so frankly put the speaker upon a level ever so much lower than his own.

"Carriage at the door, mamma," said Theodore, stepping

in from the balcony. "About time to return home, I should think."

"Is this your son, ma'am?"

"My only son, General Macan."

"And a fine boy too. A regular American citizen, isn't he now? See if we don't run him for president one of these days! How do you do, sir?"

"Thank you, I am very well," replied the dignified Theodore. "Mamma, I think you had better make haste; I don't like the evening air for you."

"There's a considerate boy, ma'am! The like of that now! In Phil's time and mine we hadn't so much thought for our mothers. We were awful troubles to our mothers."

"If it had ended there!" muttered Theodore, turning away and walking out of the room.

"You may well be proud of him, ma'am," the incorrigibly unconscious Fenian said, gazing after the boy with eyes of unutterable good nature. "Ah, but he's like his mother! Just the eyes and the beautiful hair!"

Mrs. Lorn was in positive torture. To think that all this should take place in the presence of Tyrone; that she should be so unspeakably degraded, and that she should be powerless to save herself or him, or to explain the horrid situation!

Meanwhile Colonel Quentin, as if anxious in some degree to retrieve the effect of first impressions, had deliberately engaged Tyrone in some conversation about sporting in the Far West, and succeeded at least in satisfying Tyrone that he had the education of a gentleman and the experience of a daring hunter as well as soldier. Then he said, in a low tone:

"You will excuse our, or rather my intrusion, I hope, Mr. Tyrone? Mrs. Lorn and I are old acquaintances; indeed, we were brought up together. We had not met for many years, and London is such a vast place that if I had lost this chance I might never have found another. And you will, I beg, forgive my friend here his mistakes. He is not a mere buffoon or blunderer, I assure you, but as brave a soldier as ever lived, and one who can organize and plan with almost the instinct of genius. He has come to England, I believe, with a purpose which the superficial levity of his nature helps, luckily, to conceal. Macan may write his name in history yet, in a way that you, Mr. Tyrone, of all men may be expected to approve. Thanks for your courtesy and forbearance. Good evening."

He drew Macan away with more ease than might have

been expected, and they left Tyrone thoroughly puzzled by the whole scene. Mrs. Lorn begged that she might return to town immediately. Theodore besought to be allowed to drive, but he was not indulged in this luxury, and therefore Tyrone escaped a tête-à-tête with Mrs. Lorn. The evening was beautiful, but the drive home was dull. Mrs. Lorn talked a good deal to keep up appearances, but felt thoroughly crushed. Only as Tyrone handed her into her own house and was about to take leave did she say, in a tremulous and tender voice:

"Our broken conversation of this evening—shall we not sometime renew it?"

"To what end?" said Tyrone. "Except to hear me give you my heartfelt thanks, which you know are yours already, and tell you that it is impossible."

"Oh, may I not serve you at all?"

"In that way, no—no."

"In what way, then?"

"If ever any way shows itself that wouldn't shame me to accept I shan't fail to ask you."

"You talk to me as if it were a degradation to a man ever to exchange a word of confidence on practical affairs with a woman. Of course I knew that this was the way with most men, but I did expect something better from you."

She made a little show of spirit in parting from him. She knew that men don't like abject women, and she wished to show Tyrone that she was not abject. But there was a cowering way about her and a pitiful glance in her eye which would have told a tale to any close observer. For she was one of the most prostrate of all creatures—a coquette who, having, without ever knowing it, a really passionate heart, has, after playing with love for years, suddenly become caught by the flame. She felt that the occurrence of the day had humbled her in the eyes of Tyrone. She feared that he would suspect her of low and doubtful associations, and she said to herself many times during the remainder of the weary night, "He will not call to-morrow; I know he will not call to-morrow."

## CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Lorn might have had some little consolation if she had known that the day had proved nearly as uncomfortable for "that girl" as for herself. That girl had gone out with the expectation of a very pleasant day. Captain Cadsby had insisted on taking the Grangers and their nieces to Greenwich and Richmond, to dine at the latter place. Mr. Granger, who could not give them his company all the way, was to meet them at Richmond. Jennie had a childish pleasure in driving, in rapid motion, and the bright air, and she rather liked to hear Captain Cadsby talk; and she had settled it in her mind that he must be in love with Alicia. All was going well until they passed the Greenwich hotel, and saw Tyrone and Mrs. Lorn in the window.

"See our friend Brian Boru on the balcony, Mrs. Granger?" Cadsby called out from the box, looking back at the lady.

"Your friend who, Captain Cadsby? Do tell me. No, I only saw Mr. Tyrone and that——"

"That's he, don't you know? We always call him Brian Boru."

"Do you really? How good! how very clever! But only tell me who was Brian Boru. I am so longing to know, for I am sure it must be something very interesting. I want to appreciate everything. Well, now, Brian Boru! How droll! How immensely clever and witty you are! I hope it's nothing very wicked. Perhaps I oughtn't to have asked."

"Oh yes, there's nothing in it. Brian Boru was some old Irish king who conquered the Danes, I believe, or the Saxons, or both together—I'm sure I don't know. But we always call Tyrone Brian Boru."

"Excellent! capital! Yes, I remember all about it now, of course. How stupid of me to have to ask. Isn't he handsome? I do think him so very handsome; Mr. Granger says he isn't. But men never see anything to admire in each other. I dare say you don't think him goodlooking either, Captain Cadsby? Men are so dreadfully jealous—twenty times worse than women, I think, don't you, Alicia?"

"Indeed I do, aunt."

"But I think Tyrone's a deuced goodlooking fellow," said Cadsby, "so the criticism don't apply to me, ladies. A good

fellow too, for all his nonsense. I never saw any fellow who can stick to a horse better; but I believe all the Irishmen can do that. He's a clever fellow too, speaks capitally; wish I had his voice. It's a shame the Government doesn't do something for him. He must be awfully hard up, I should say."

"Who was the lady with him, Captain Cadsby?" asked Alicia, the first moment she got a chance of edging in a word. Jennie listened with eager ears.

"Alicia, my dear," interfered her aunt, "what can it concern us to know? We really mustn't ask these questions. We had much better not have them answered, I daresay. Captain Cadsby doesn't know who the person was, I presume; and if he did he wouldn't tell *us*. No, no, my dear; oh no!"

Cadsby only laughed.

"I know all about it," he said, "and it's nothing of the kind, I assure you. Not at all; quite the reverse, in fact. That's Mrs. Lorn, a rich American widow, and a splendid woman too. People say Tyrone's engaged to her; at least they say he will marry her. She will marry him, is the way I'd rather put it. She has no end of money, and Tyrone can't do without money."

"What mercenary creatures all you men are! Mrs. Lorn, a rich widow from America? Is she in good society at all?"

"Oh yes, I think so."

"I wonder we never met her," and Mrs. Granger made mental resolve that the acquaintanceship should be formed somehow, and that the beautiful and rich widow should be seen in Denzill Street. As old Frederick William of Prussia surveyed all men with regard to their fitness for a place in his gigantic regiment, so Mrs. Granger considered all men and women with regard to their desirability as figures in her Denzill Street drawing-room.

"She's very handsome, I think," said Alicia.

"Very handsome indeed," echoed Jennie, sadly, and wishing in her heart that she could hold any other opinion. A cloud had come over her for that evening, and she detested Captain Cadsby for the manner in which he had spoken of Tyrone, the easy, good-humoured way in which he had pictured him as a mere clever broken-down fortune-hunter. "That he is not and never could be; never!" Jennie protested energetically in her own heart. "If he's going to marry her it is because he loves her. Why should he not

love her? She's beautiful, and, I suppose, she is very clever and understands all his subjects, and can talk about Parliament. She's not like *me*."

Jennie had to bite her lips, for the tears were starting to her eyes. That would never do. So she talked and rattled on as much as she could all the day, drew out her aunt, flirted wildly with Captain Cadsby, and praised Mr. Granger when he arrived in a way that delighted him with his niece. Her spirits were so exuberant that they almost frightened Alicia, who kept all the evening through in expectation that so gleeful a mood must suddenly change. When Jennie was a little child her sister remembered that a prolonged fit of joyous laughter was almost certain to end with her in a sudden paroxysm of tears. Even still it did not generally take much to make Jennie cry, and Alicia, who was one of the few composed and even-tempered women in all the world, was much afraid that some contradiction or other impulse to a change of mood might unseal the fountain of tears at any moment. But Alicia's fears were in vain. The stronger and profounder emotions which were beginning to govern Jennie's heart were bracing up her nerves and her nature, not enfeebling them. Jennie would show no tears at such a time as that.

So the bright day faded and they drove home by starlight, and Jennie's heart sank within her. It was a sort of relief to her, when they reached Denzill Street, to find a letter for Alicia from her father, in which he declared that he could not do without his darling girls any longer, and that Carpenter shrould bring a carriage for them at three next day. It soothed her to fancy that within the high walls which enclosed her Surrey home she might find peace again, and that the old tree of her childhood might bring healing in the rustle of its branches, for Jennie now knew well enough that she was wounded in the heart.

Alicia could not understand what Jennie meant when the girl, clasping her suddenly round the waist and laying her head upon her breast, exclaimed, vehemently:

"Oh, Alicia, yes, let us go home! home, home, to-morrow!"

* * * * *

"Oh you dear, dear darling old tree! Oh you delightful old friend! How glad I am to come to you again, you great, faithful, honest, sweet, stupid old friend!"

Half laughing, half crying, Jennie flung her arms round the tree when next day she first came under its shelter, and

she put her lips to its rugged bark and kissed it and fondled it again and again. Nobody was near to see her, for her father had not returned, and Alicia, in company with Carpenter, was taking a careful survey of the whole household, in order to make sure that nothing had suffered or gone astray during her absence from her home duties.

Jennie, therefore, had the ground all to herself, and might caress her tree and cling around its trunk and shake its old branches to make them rustle their best welcome in her ears, and there was no one to think her demonstrations ridiculous.

"You dear old tree, if you knew what a fool I have been and how much ashamed of myself I am, would you welcome me at all, I wonder? If you knew how wretched I have made myself, and how glad I am to be here again and hidden somehow, perhaps you would open your kindly arms to me again. I am fond of you and you can't preach to me or give me good advice, and so I am glad to be in your company. There goes my hair down again! No matter, *you* wont mind."

Finding, however, that her hair had all tumbled about her and must be fastened up somehow, Jennie ceased embracing her old companion and seated herself under his sheltering arms and began to rearrange her tresses. Throwing her head a little back for the purpose, her eyes looked through the trellis-work of lucent green leaves into the far broad deep of the blue heaven, and her mind returned to the time when she used to dream herself, through the magical gateways of that green and that azure, into the East and the realms of story. The breath of the wind reminded her that when she lay in the branches and was rocked by a certain summer breeze it made her believe—she never could tell why—that she was in Persia; and always the conviction was strong upon her mind that that particular wind—that and none other—had floated from Persia to fan her cheek and bring her its perfumes. And she remembered how the name of Persia had for her no set geographical meaning, but only conveyed ideas of some land of unsetting sun and odorous breezes, of music and soft golden waters drowsily lapping on silver sands, of adventure and brilliant costumes, and perpetual happiness.

All this, which she had nearly forgotten of late, rushed back suddenly with a breath of the wind, and, letting fall her hand from her hair, she exclaimed, "Oh, Persia, my Persia! I had forgotten it and it is all come back again! It used to make me so happy!"

She had not time, however, to indulge any more in the pursuit of that kind of happiness now, for a servant came to tell her that her father had come. The appearance of Mr. Aspar on any scene, real or imaginary, always dispelled romance as effectually and quickly as a rousing touch sends away a nightmare. But Jennie was so fond of her father, and had been so many days without seeing him, that she was delighted to hear of his coming, although he banished her Persian Fata Morgana, and she ran to meet him with her hair still in disorder.

Mr. Aspar was talking with Alicia and apparently was uneasy or annoyed, for he was rubbing his hands nervously and looking sideways. Jennie ran to him and kissed him. He was hot and flurried and looked undignified.

"Darling papa, how glad I am to see you!"

"Yes, my love, yes, yes! I have no doubt, no doubt, and I much rejoice at your coming home, my love. I was telling Alicia, my dear——"

Here he stopped and looked to Alicia as if for help. In truth Mr. Aspar was a little afraid of his youngest daughter, he was so fond of her and devoted to her. "Perfect love casteth out fear" does not always hold good in the relationship of a man to an impetuous woman.

Jennie began to feel uncomfortable. She had always observed when a child that this sort of thing was a prelude to her learning that she had done something wrong.

"What were you telling Alicia, papa? Something about me? Wont you tell it to me?"

"Only this, my love, that I am glad you are at home, you know, and I don't want you to go to your Aunt Lucy's any more—for the present, I mean—because I don't like some of the people you meet there. I don't want my darling Jennie to meet—well, to meet that Mr. Tyrone."

Jennie felt herself tingling all over with nervous excitement. But she tried to be easy and self-possessed.

"Why not, papa?"

"Because he is not a young man of high moral character, my love; because he is very wild and dissipated and all that; and he's full of self-conceit and family pride, and he's as poor as Job and as proud as Lucifer."

"But, papa, what does all that matter to me? We saw him first here, you know, and I didn't want to see him."

"I didn't know then what I know now, Jennie, and I want

you to avoid him, and you mustn't go anywhere that he goes to. What does he go to see you for? what right has he——"

"He never came to see *me*," said Jennie, growing red all over and almost inclined to shed tears; "he has nothing to do with me. What could he care about me? Alicia, why don't you tell papa, and why doesn't he speak to *you* about all this as well as to me?"

"I have told papa already, dear, that Mr. Tyrone only called to visit Aunt Lucy a few times and was very civil, and that's all. He always seemed to me a quiet gentleman. I never saw him paying any particular attention to Jennie."

"You don't understand these people, Alicia. I tell you he's a pauper and he can't marry unless he finds some woman with a great fortune; and perhaps he thinks Jennie has a great fortune. And she hasn't. I can tell you she *hasn't*. I'll not have him seeing her!"

Mr. Aspar's manner was quite wild with excitement and his hands were shivering. A weak man overborne by excitement is one of the most pitiable objects in life. A strange pang of pathos and pity shot through Jennie's heart as she looked at him. It banished all her rising anger. She went up to him and took his trembling hands in hers.

"My dear papa, you are tormenting yourself all about nothing. I daresay Mr. Tyrone knows perfectly well that I am not a girl with a fortune, and he knows, too, that we don't belong to his class. I know it all comes of your love for me; but don't you see, dear, how you degrade your poor daughter by speaking of her in such a way? Don't you see that it makes me ashamed and humbled and wretched? Suppose any of this talk were to come to Mr. Tyrone's ears. What would he think but that our silly and stupid vanity had led us to believe that he was thinking of us in such a way? You may be sure he never thought of me, of us, but as poor girls to whom he felt bound as a gentleman to be civil. Oh, please don't let us speak of this any more."

She talked to him almost as one might talk to an excited child. In her pained and saddened eyes he was indeed, for the moment, hardly anything else. Jennie could not tell why, then or after, but the demeanour of her father impressed her strangely with some vague sense of coming calamity; some indistinct, awful presage that all their old world was beginning to shatter, that trials and experiences utterly new were in store for them. She devoted herself for the moment

to soothing and pleasing her father, and after a while he allowed her to bring him into quiet and general conversation.

They dined together pleasantly enough, only that Mr. Aspar was always taking up some costly decanter or plate or ornament of some kind and studying it and appraising its value in an anxious and harassed kind of way. He complained, too, of the sherry on the table; said it was far too good for dinner wine when nobody was there, and that he could get sherry which would answer the purpose just as well for twenty-four shillings a dozen. There was on the chimney-piece a little fantastic ornament of which Jennie in particular always used to be very fond. It was a little child seated on a dolphin's back and playing on a tiny pipe, while the waves of bright and frosted silver played round his plump feet. The whole thing was silver and of rare workmanship. Around this trinket Mr. Aspar seemed to hover anxiously all the evening. Jennie followed him with wondering eyes. He kept constantly taking it in his hand and then glancing secretly round to see if anybody was watching. At last Jennie saw him take out his handkerchief, wrap the ornament carefully in it, and put it in his pocket. After that he seemed a little better satisfied and grew more pleasant. Alicia played and sang to him, and about nine o'clock Carpenter came and the two were closeted together; and then Carpenter went back to town, and Mr. Aspar went early to bed.

Alicia was nearly undressed and was brushing her hair in her bedroom when Jennie came in.

"Alicia dear, don't you think papa seems rather unhappy to-night, not quite like himself?"

"No, Jennie, I didn't notice. Sit down, dear. I thought you were in bed."

"I was going to bed long ago, but then I didn't. I saw your light and thought I should like to say good-night once more. Then you didn't notice anything strange?"

"About papa? Oh, no, dear"—Alicia was one of those quiet and comfortable persons who always assume that to-morrow must needs be like to-day, and that their microcosm is exempt from the laws of convulsion—"nothing at all. He is always distressing himself about something or other. I wish he would not talk in that way about Mr. Tyrone, because really people might imagine, if they were to hear him, that *we* had been making ourselves ridiculous. I can't think

who can have put such things into his head. What is it to us whether Mr. Tyrone is dissipated or not?"

"I don't believe he is dissipated," said Jennie, with energy. "It's all nonsense and calumny, and I don't believe one word of it."

"But you can't know anything about what he is, Jennie. How could you know, dear?"

"I do not know; I am certain of it."

"But I don't see that it matters to us any way. We can't help him, and I don't suppose he ever bestowed a thought on you or me."

"I don't suppose he ever did," said Jennie, rather faintly.

"Of course not, dear; why should he? But then I don't see why we should be called upon to distress ourselves about him. And I quite forgot to relieve papa's mind altogether by telling him that Mr. Tyrone is going to marry that handsome American woman."

"How do you know that he is?"

"Well, Captain Cadsby told us so yesterday."

"I don't believe Captain Cadsby knows anything at all about it. But you may tell papa of it, if you think it will please him or do him any good," said Jennie, sadly, and recalled by the words from any vague and selfish dreams. "You didn't think he looked strangely to-day?"

"Who, Jennie?"

"Oh, papa, of course."

"Why, dear, I have said already that I observed nothing particular in his appearance. I know his ways, Jennie, better than you do, because of all the household affairs, you know."

"Yes, of which all the trouble falls on *you*," said Jennie, remorsefully.

"Oh, I am very glad to look after things and to save you a kind of occupation you don't like. But I am used to papa's ways and I assure you it's nothing. You needn't be uneasy; he is quite well. Now you must go and sleep, dear."

Alicia kindly and placidly dismissed her. Jennie did not give any further hint of the vague alarm which was troubling her. It would be only making Alicia uneasy for nothing probably, and, besides, there was a sober contentment in Alicia which Jennie feared she could hardly bring into sympathy with her own mood of shadowy apprehension. So she went to bed and kept her secret thought to her own breast This was the second great thought which she must now keep

hidden in her heart from the light of day and the eyes even of affection. How lonely the girl began to feel! How completely deserted and given over to her own sad and doubting soul! She considered herself as culpable in deceiving those who loved her; culpable in saying one thing and thinking all the time of another, trying to talk lightly and carelessly where her heart was all absorbed. Never again, then, comes the simple old time! Never again could every word that left her lips be allowed to leap directly from her heart! Chill patience and self-repression only for her, and loneliness! The shadow of a coming trouble, unseen as yet, seemed to be creeping upon her. The bitter pains of a hopeless passion which she dared not confess, of which she feared she ought to be ashamed, were already tormenting her. She tried to sleep, and longed for morning. She felt as one might feel who is suddenly plunged into dark and tossing waters, and who, amid all the terrible strangeness of the unexpected fall from the firm earth and life above, is conscious of a wild agony of wonder as to the new chapter of existence which is to open when the waves shall have closed over their victim and done their work.

## CHAPTER XI.

There is a great pleasure to a girl in martyrdom for love. To be out of favour with one's parents for the sake of the man who loves her has a sweet bitterness in it for any maiden of character and spirit. But it is a very different thing for a young woman to be out of favour for the sake of a man who does not care a straw about her. This Jennie believed to be her case at present, and it was very trying and bitter. Added to the vague presentiments of coming troubles it seemed too much to bear, at least without motion and fresh air to help. Always when anything troubled or vexed her—hitherto she had had only vexations chiefly, and hardly troubles—Jennie tried the remedy of a long walk. She was accustomed to range over the Surrey common as freely as if it were her own park. To lie under the tree at home was lazy enjoyment; a thing to do in happiness and whereby happiness got a new zest.

So the day after her return home she made up her mind for a tramp on the common. Mr. Aspar had gone to town,

and Alicia, being asked if she would come for a walk by Jennie, who hoped so eagerly that she would not, had only answered, "Oh, Jennie dear, you know I can't go; I *must* visit Mrs. Pember, we haven't been near her this ever so long. And you ought to go too, but of course you wont go?"

"That I wont, dear." Jennie had come to enjoy the chartered privileges of a genuine Bohemian who wouldn't do things just because they were socially right and needful to do. "Not if I know it. But I admire you, Alicia, for going all the same. Somebody must do it, I suppose."

"Well, yes, somebody must. It would be disgraceful you know—such a kind woman. Oh, yes, I must go."

"I suppose I ought to go too. I don't like the idea of you having to do it and I not. It looks like being a sneak. I think I ought to go."

"No, no, Jennie, you needn't go. What would be the use of the two of us wasting our time, and when you don't like it? If you did that would be a different thing. Oh no, go and have your walk."

So Jennie's conscience being pacified on this point, and without much difficulty, she started out for her walk. As the sun then stood in the heaven the high walls of the cottage grounds kept it effectually out, and the garden in front of the windows looked comparatively dark and sad. So when Jennie opened the gate the common abroad seemed all glowing in light and Jennie passed at once out of shadow into sun. The effect upon her spirits was wonderful. "This is living," she thought to herself, as she tripped across the common.

The summer had come slowly into the year that season. May and June had been rather wet and misty; even now the air was singularly mild and fresh for so advanced a period, and the grass was still soft and green. That morning a light shower had given new refreshment to the shrubs and the brushwood and the wild flowers, and vague sweet fragrances hovered around Jennie's path. Her heart swelled with the gladdening influences of the hour and she began to think she must be happy.

What made her suddenly start and stop as she glanced to the left, towards the little road or beaten path which led to the railway station? It is not too much to say that the common trembled for a moment under Jennie's feet and that the sun vibrated with sudden incoherent pulsation in the sky, for she saw Mr. Tyrone coming along that path.

She might have passed on her way and left him to follow if he would or to go to the cottage, for she did not doubt that he had come to pay a visit there. Many girls, though longing to meet him, would have had coquetry enough to pass on and pretend not to have seen him. Jennie had not one gleam of coquetry in her nature. She knew there was no one now in the house to receive him, for Alicia had gone out before she did, and she would not have him go there for nothing. For the moment she forgot all about her father's injunctions and fears. She not only stopped when she saw Tyrone, but went frankly out of her way to meet him. A very pretty sight she was, all blushing and animated and glad, as he came near. He thought he had never seen so bright and pretty a girl, and by some inexplicable blending of admiration and regret a sudden shade passed over his handsome face.

"Were you coming to see us? How kind of you!"

"Very kind—to myself. Most of my kindnesses are like that. I called yesterday at Mrs. Granger's and found that you had gone home, and she encouraged me to come out here to see you."

"Such a long way to come, and so good of you! Nobody ever calls upon us except dull people who live about here. But I am so sorry there is no one at home. Papa is in town and Alicia has gone to pay a visit."

"I am sorry too, but some other time I shall, perhaps, be more fortunate. But now you were going somewhere; don't let me prevent you."

"I was only rambling about the common. I hate visiting—I mean paying visits."

"May I ramble with you for a little?"

"I shall be delighted if *you* like it. Do you enjoy a walk?"

"I don't know that I ever take a walk for the sake of a walk, for the enjoyment of a walk, but I know I shall enjoy this walk with you Come, which way were you going?"

"I wonder which way would you like—towards the quarry or towards the lake?"

"Well, the whole place is new to me; I was never here before but once, the day I had the pleasure of dining at your house, and then I hardly looked at anything. The lake sounds more tempting perhaps, doesn't it? Is it a lake?"

"Oh no, not a lake; only a little pool or pond with an island in the middle about the size of a flower-pot, and such a lovely Scotch fir upon it! But Alicia and I call it our

lake; and it is really very pretty. I am so glad you like to go there."

They turned and walked side by side the way that Jennie knew so well. The very air seemed trembling with happiness to her, and she longed to consecrate anew her little lake with the association of such an unexpected delight.

"Now you must point out to me all the loveliness of the place," said Tyrone.

"I shall be delighted, but I am rather afraid to talk to you."

"Why so? You don't seem afraid."

"Yet I am, because you are so clever and know so much and I know nothing. Are you fond of ferns and wild flowers and grasses?"

"I hardly know one flower or plant from another. I know an oak from a birch, and that's about all. Flowers I have observed chiefly as Covent Garden bouquets."

"Is it possible? You don't care for botany at all?"

"I don't know anything about it, or about the stars over our head, or the trees that wave around us, or anything of the kind. I shall be afraid to speak before you, for you know so much and I know nothing."

"Oh, that would be dreadful! But it's nonsense. You make speeches and are very clever, everybody says, and you must know a great deal. As to the trees and the ferns and the birds and the stars and all that, a school-girl could learn enough in half-a-year, and you in half-a-day, if you were only inclined to take the trouble."

"Inclination to take trouble has never been among my gifts, I am sorry to say."

"You always disparage yourself, I observe. Why is that?"

"Perhaps to disarm others."

"But why not be quite natural? Why have a motive in anything? Why not just speak plainly out without caring whether people are disarmed or not? Don't you think disparaging oneself is almost as bad as praising oneself?"

"I suppose it really is only vanity showing itself in rather a worse form. For myself, I fear I am growing more and more of an egotist."

"Are you?" asked Jennie, meditatively. "Well, yes, I think there is something egotistical in you," she said, looking frankly up at him. "But I like it in you; I always did."

"Come now, I shall only grow worse instead of better if

you tolerate my faults in this way. Why do you say you like it?"

"Shall I tell you—quite plainly?"

"If you please."

"Well, because it makes you talk of yourself, and not go over the mere commonplaces of conversation as you must do otherwise, for I should never have the courage to talk about myself, and in any case there isn't anything to say. But you have seen the world and been in it and of it, the wonderful, wonderful outer world that I have never seen, only read of in books and papers. You have been already in that great battle of life. You have actually spoken—perhaps chatted—with great men, wonderful people, whom I have only read of and thought of as gods and demigods, creatures of other spheres! So I like you to talk about yourself because you have been with the great people."

"But would it not be better if I talked of some of the great people?"

"Oh yes, do tell me something about them! I never spoke to a great man; hardly ever saw one. Can you tell me of Louis Napoleon and Disraeli and Gladstone and Bright, and Dickens, Thackeray, Bulwer Lytton, Tennyson, Browning—any of these—all of them?"

"All those I have seen and met; some very often, some I know well."

Tyrone soon found himself discoursing on the personal peculiarities of these and various other celebrities. He could always talk well when he liked or felt interested, as he did on the present occasion. This was an entirely new kind of experience to him, to deliver a series of extempore lectures to a girl on the characters and habits of great men whom he had known. This is not the kind of conversation for which one qualifies in a London drawing-room, and Tyrone was, perhaps, a little surprised to find what an interesting study is the great statesman whom you see with indifference every day, when you set yourself to describe him to an intelligent and eager listener.

"What a magnificent pageant life is!" Jennie suddenly said, when Tyrone had been describing some grand rivalry of parliamentary orators.

"Is it?" he asked, in unaffected surprise and sadness. "I have not often looked at it in that light."

"Oh yes, a superb spectacle, if one takes no higher view

of it. When I hear you describe such scenes it is as if you told me of the battles of the Titans and the Gods. And you move in such a life and have a part in it? How favoured men are above any possibility to women! I think I could bear anything to come within the very fringe of such an existence."

"You must marry a member of Parliament," said Tyrone, "spur him on to make a figure in the House, and then you will know all these people and may come to be an influence yourself."

Tyrone had not the least motive in making the remark but genuine good nature. But it sent an odd little pang into Jennie's heart and made her red lip quiver. She rallied, however, in an instant, and said, with affected gravity:

"I know Mr. Prinker and Captain Cadsby. Mr. Prinker I am afraid is a little elderly, and Captain Cadsby doesn't seem likely ever to hold his own among the giants of debate."

The conversation had been stunted, however, by Tyrone's unlucky remark and the meaningless pleasantry to which Jennie felt herself driven.

"I saw you and your sister with Cadsby the other day," said Tyrone, "at Greenwich."

"Yes, we were going to Richmond," was all Jennie had to answer.

"A young friend of mine fell forthwith in love with you both, and beseeches me to bring him to see you. May I do so? He is only twelve years old, I think."

"Oh yes. A boy?"

"A boy, a wonderful little fellow."

"I never knew a boy," said Jennie; "I don't think I ever spoke to one."

"Then begin with Theodore Lorn, the brightest, most precocious, most absurd of dear little urchins. He's the son of a lady whom I count among my friends, Mrs. Lorn."

"I saw *her*. She's one of the most beautiful women I ever saw."

"She's very handsome and clever and kind. She would like to know you very much."

"Captain Cadsby told me—I mean told us—about her," said Jennie, not feeling quite certain whether she would like to know Mrs. Lorn.

"Now what did Cadsby tell you?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Well, because you look as if he had told you something odd, and Cadsby is such a fool."

"And likely, therefore, to converse with me! Come now, that is a compliment."

"Oh, Cadsby would talk up to Madame de Stäel or George Sand if he got the chance. You wont tell me what he said? Then I'll tell you."

"Pray don't. What he said was no harm, and it doesn't matter."

"Well, I think it does. Of course I know Cadsby said that Mrs. Lorn and I were to be married and all that kind of thing. I ask you seriously not to believe this, Miss Aspar. Mrs. Lorn is a good and kind friend who, I am sure, would feel greatly pained if she heard such nonsense."

"How I wish I hadn't spoke of this," said Jennie, gravely. "It has vexed you."

"But you didn't speak of it. *I* did. I do ask you, Miss Aspar, not to believe anything of the kind if you should hear it. I ask you quite seriously."

"Of course I believe anything you tell me. But it surely would have been no discredit?"

"It would; to me it would. It would imply that I was trying to marry a rich woman just because of her money. Miss Aspar, I am the poorest man, I suppose, in the House of Commons. If I were to marry I must either bring my wife down to miserable poverty or live on my wife's fortune. I will do neither. In Mrs. Lorn's case the thing would be impossible under any circumstances; but I tell you frankly I should be sorry if *you* believed me a fortune-hunter."

"I do not. I never did," said Jennie. "I never believed anything people said"—and then she stopped, remembering with a pang what her father had said, and wondering whether she was not now guilty of a great sin in thus meeting with Tyrone.

"People did speak against me, then, to you?" said Tyrone, quickly and with bitterness. "Of course they did. They told you that I was worthless and poor, and idle and dissipated. Come, did they not say all this and ever so much more?"

She looked up at him wondering at his sudden impetuosity, and hardly knowing what to answer or whither the conversation was to lead.

"Half that people say is true," Tyrone went on, "and the other half is false. I can't explain to *you*, but my worst

faults have been extravagance and folly. I want you to believe that and nothing worse, whoever says it. I was badly brought up, Miss Aspar, as I told you before, I think—taught to consider myself an exiled Irish chief with a mission and a'l that; and I never knew father or mother or sister, and the result is as you see. But I want you to believe nothing worse of me and without explanation. If I had a sister I would ask the same of her, and I know she would accept my word."

"And so do I," said Jennie, blushing with emotion, and almost with alarm, at the strange and sudden turn the talk had taken. "I believe every word you say to me, Mr. Tyrone, and I shall never believe anything against you."

He took her hand in his and pressed it. For half a moment it seemed as if he were about to raise it to his lips. Tyrone was bred among a stately old society in Paris, where the habits still lingered which would have made such an action only a becoming expression of a gentleman's loyal respect and deference. But he remembered that he was in Surrey, and he only pressed her hand and dropped it. To Jennie the mere touch of his hand on hers had created a new world for good or ill, and laid all the old world in ashes.

There was a moment's pause.

"This is the place we were coming to," said Jennie. "This is the island. Is it not beautiful? And that Scotch fir, how graceful it looks!"

They were standing by the margin of a large clear pond with an islet of red clay in the middle, and on the islet some shrubs and brushwood and one Scotch fir looking lonely and picturesque. Across the wide common there were few living objects to be seen. A gray old mansion-house could be discerned through its trees in the distance to the right, and a church spire rising not far from it.

"I love this place," said Jennie.

"Are you not tired?" he asked.

"A little," she answered. "I will sit here for a moment; the grass is quite dry."

She sat upon the grass; he threw himself near her. The blue sky surrounded them with soft delicious dreamy charms, the ripple of the water was in their ears, and for some moments neither spoke.

## CHAPTER XII.

JENNIE went home that evening trembling, delighted, and yet half afraid, having a sort of sensation that she had done wrong; not because she had met Mr. Tyrone, for that she could not have avoided, in fact; nor even because she had walked with him—that she thought, of her innocence, she could not have avoided in good manners; but simply and entirely because she had enjoyed the walk so much. But she disdained concealment, and so she told Alicia plump and plain all that had happened; and she would have told her father too, only that he did not come home that night. Alicia seemed horrified, whereupon Jennie became rebellious and felt remorse no more.

Next day Alicia went out to pay another visit. She thought she was safe in this, for Mr. Tyrone certainly would not call two days in succession, and Mr. Aspar would probably be at home that night, and it would be all talked out somehow. Tyrone did not come certainly; but Jennie had a male visitor for all that.

A hansom cab rattled up to the gate about one o'clock, and a very small young gentleman leaped briskly out and sent in a card for either of the ladies. One of the maids brought it, with a broad smile upon her face, to Jennie. It bore the inscription—

"THEODORE LORN,
"Hyde Park Gardens."

"Oh!" exclaimed Jennie, in amusement and wonder, "this is the little boy. What am I to do with him? I don't know anything about boys! Why did Alicia go out and leave me to this dreadful boy? Show him into the drawing-room, Jane; I'll come down; I must! Give him something to read; I don't know what. 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' or 'Lilliput Levée.' We haven't any boys' books."

Jennie had been idle and lazy all the morning, and was now only beginning properly to dress for the day. She was really half alarmed at having to entertain this boy, and yet wildly delighted at his coming, for he had been sent in a manner by Tyrone. She finished her dressing very quickly. She wore a short-skirted violet dress with a belt of dark leather, and pretty little black slippers with buckles.

When she entered the drawing-room her visitor was seated in an arm-chair, reading; but the book he had in his hand was certainly not "Lilliput Levée" or "Alice's Adventures." He rose the moment he heard the rustle of Jennie's skirts and was about to make a very formal bow, but that she went over to him and held out her hand in the friendliest way.

"I am very glad to see you, Master Theodore," she said. "I have heard of you, and I feel as if I knew you. But I think I must call you Theodore."

This utter informality rather routed Theodore's original plan of campaign as to the opening of the conversation. Like most other clever and precocious boys he was shy and awkward with young women.

"Oh, ah, thanks; yes, delighted," he began; then blurted out, with a recovering burst of nature, "Do call me Theodore: everybody does, you know." There was self-sacrifice in this too, for a girl's calling him Theodore at first sight was cruelly conclusive as to her opinion of his age. "I wanted to come to see you, and Tyrone said I might. Mamma—Mrs. Lorn, you know—wants to ask if she may be permitted to invite you to call on her, and I said I'd come and ask."

"I am so much obliged to your mamma. She is very kind. How beautiful she is!"

"Yes, isn't she stunning?" said Theodore, reddening with pleasure. "But, I say, so are—so is the other girl, your sister, I mean. She's splendid."

"Alicia's charming, I think. I am sorry she's not here. But she'll come presently. Would you like to see the garden?"

"Oh yes. But may I look at some of the books; you have some very nice editions, I see."

"We have some nice books. Have you read 'Alice's Adventures?'"

"Just looked into it. I don't care much for that sort of thing. Children's stories are all so dull and silly."

"What were you reading when I came in?" Jennie asked, with growing amusement.

"Oh, this book of Gladstone's on Homer. I don't think much of it, do you?"

"Well, I didn't read very much of it. I am afraid I soon got out of my depth. I don't think I quite understood it. Isn't it very clever and profound?"

"Don't think so at all. Oh no, the fact is, you see, there isn't any real Greek scholarship in England."

"Isn't there? What a pity!"

"Well, I don't know. The English mind isn't up to it somehow. If you want Greek scholarship you must go out of England."

"To America?" asked Jennie, in perfect good faith, believing it quite possible that the New World might have opened a great new chapter in classical study as well as in other things, and glad to say something gratifying to her visitor's national feelings.

"America!" said Theodore, with a boyish and genuine laugh. "Oh, come now, that's your fun! Why, I say, we're worse even than you are."

"Then I'm very glad; but I didn't know anything about it."

"Girls don't learn these things," said Theodore, grandly. He was becoming quite brave in the presence of a young woman who didn't know where Greek scholarship was to be found. Jennie's ignorance was the luckiest thing in smoothing the way of conversation. It restored the balance of the sexes. "No," he proceeded with dignity, "if you want real scholarship, you know, you must go to Germany. The Germans have anticipated us in everything. We have only got to read their books. I studied in Germany for years. I tell you it's something awful, the things you have to learn. Were you ever at school?"

"Never."

"Ah, then you don't know what study is. But you couldn't know it in an English school anyhow. You read French and Italian and German though, and all that?"

"Yes, I can read them, and speak in a sort of way; but I go wrong in the grammar terribly when I have to speak quickly."

"Ah, yes, of course you must live in a country to speak the language properly. I can speak German and Italian quite fluently, French not so well. You should hear Tyrone talk French and Italian too. He might pass off for a native. Tell you a good thing. Tyrone dined with us one day and there was a Frenchman there, a splendid fellow, a refugee. There was Captain Cadsby, too, and the Frenchman got near Cadsby at table and heard he was a member of Parliament, and he said he so liked to be near English members of Parliament, for they could talk French like Parisians. Cadsby got quite red, for his French is awful. It came out that the Frenchman had only met one other member of Parliament

before, and that was Tyrone. He met him twice at different houses and didn't quite catch the name, and thought each time he was talking to a different fellow. So he took it into his head that all English M.P.'s can talk French like Parisians, and poor Cadsby thought he was chaffing him."

"Mr. Tyrone is very clever," said Jennie, specially interested on that point.

"Isn't he immense? You should see him shoot; and do you know that he can translate Greek like anything? Such a fellow on horseback! I'm afraid he's indolent, though; I'm greatly afraid he's indolent. Too bad, you know, if with all his talents he shouldn't come to anything."

"Too bad indeed," thought Jennie, with a sigh, and much wondering at the gravity of the amazing boy who stood near her. They had been standing all the while, and during the talk Theodore kept taking up book after book, turning over it and making expressive comment of admiration or otherwise with moving eyebrows and lips.

"Come into the garden, Theodore," said Jennie; "the day's lovely, and I want to show you my tree and my flowers. Don't you care for flowers? I'll send some for your mamma, if you'll take them."

"All right; she'll be delighted. She's fond of flowers. All women are," said Theodore, sententiously.

He looked as if he thought he ought to offer his arm to Jennie, but she in simple unconsciousness took his hand in hers and led him out. The balance of the sexes was again unsettled.

She showed him everything in the garden, and then her tree, her own special tree.

"I used to climb to the top of it," Jennie said, "and sit there and read books half the day."

"But girls don't climb trees, I thought?"

"Good girls don't, I believe," said Jennie, laughing; "but I did. I could climb it now just as well, only for the long petticoats. I used to slide on the little pond behind the house when there was ice; and once the ice broke and I fell in, and papa gave orders to Carpenter, our man, that the ice must be all broken early every morning, and that stopped my sliding."

"I should like to climb that tree," said Theodore, feeling bound to prove that he could not be outdone by a girl.

"It's a little difficult, Theodore," said Jennie, in full good faith; "and if you were to fall——"

"Oh, come now, I say! As if I couldn't climb it if you could!"

"I had long practice, you know. And then it was my tree and wouldn't hurt me. Then look how you are dressed. Those clothes are not made for climbing trees."

"I don't care about that a red cent. I meant I don't care anything. If you are not afraid of your tree being spoiled——"

"My dear old tree hasn't much to spoil, he's safe enough. But, my dear boy, pray don't hurt yourself."

"Here goes," said Theodore, scrambling in among the branches, by first "shinning" up the trunk. Now if he had been content to remain among the broad lower boughs all would have been well. But he was resolved to get among the higher branches, where Jennie used to have her perch long ago, and really that one particular perch was rather difficult to reach. Jennie, as she said, had grown into the practice, having begun the climbing when she was about the size of a kitten. But Theodore was new to the peculiarity of the tree, and his shiny little high-heeled boots were not made for climbing, and he was too eager to show his skill and daring. So he caught at a wrong branch, which was not strong; it broke, he lost his seat and foothold with the shock, and came crashing down through the boughs. Very cleverly, however, he twined his legs round one of the extending lower branches and swung there head downwards within five feet and a half of the earth, and Jennie caught him in her arms and lifted him bodily down. She was very much alarmed, for she saw blood upon his face, and she sat on the ground at once under the tree, and took the boy in her lap, and pressed her handkerchief to his face and spoke to him in frightened and petting tones, and in her excitement utterly set the crushing seal of hopeless boyhood on him by kissing his cheek.

Perhaps it was this indignity which brought Theodore fully to himself. For he rallied at once, and declared that he wasn't hurt the least in the world, and there really was nothing very serious about it; for the blood which had so alarmed Jennie proved to be only from a scratch on the chin, inflicted by a spiteful little branch on the falling adventurer. So they were soon very happy again and glad, and Theodore was able to laugh merrily at his mishap.

"I told you the tree was mine, you know," said Jennie; "and it wont allow strangers to climb it without my permission. You know I didn't give you my permission. That was why you failed."

"Oh, I could climb it as easily as anything. I'll do it another time, you bet. But I say, Miss Aspar"—they were now seated side by side, under the tree; and Theodore looked up to her in a beseeching, shamefaced way.

"Don't call me Miss Aspar, Theodore. Call me Jennie, please."

"Well, Jennie;" and the boy blushed a little. "I say, Jennie, you wont tell anyone?"

"Tell anyone what, Theodore?"

"Oh, you know, about my falling down and that! I don't want to be laughed at, you know."

She pressed the boy's hand. "No, Theodore, I shan't say a word about it, you may rely on me; though there was nothing to laugh at, for you climbed splendidly."

"But people would laugh; so mind you don't say anything."

"*Parole d'honneur.* I'll not even give the faintest hint to anybody."

"That's right. I shouldn't like anyone to know; I don't mind you, because——"

"Because what, dear?"

"Well, because you saw it for one thing, and then I think you're a regular trump!"

They presently began to chat very pleasantly and familiarly under the tree, as if they were brother and sister. Suddenly Jennie said:

"Are you not hungry, Theodore? I'm very, very, very hungry."

Theodore was accustomed to have a regular luncheon set out for him at three o'clock, a luncheon of rigorously fashionable kind, with every delicacy not of the season and difficult to get, and he did not always eat much of it. But what with the drive out and the air, and the climbing and the fall and the talk, his regular ways were a little unsettled this day, and he fancied he did feel hungry. In any case he wanted to feel just as Jennie felt; so he said, in a half-abashed sort of way, that he too was hungry.

"Come with me," said Jennie, jumping up and taking him by the hand. "*We* dine early to-day, Alicia and I, because

papa isn't coming home to dinner. We dine at five, and so we don't have any regular luncheon. Let's have some bread and jam."

Bread and jam for the imitator and friend of Tyrone! Theodore felt almost overwhelmed. But it was of no use striving to resist his destiny now; that kiss had brought him down. It is hopeless to try to be a grown gentleman with a girl who has taken you down from a tree and kissed you unasked and of her own accord. Theodore began to think that the whole thing, though undoubtedly humbling, was very pleasant.

"Stay, we'll have it out here under the sky," said Jennie. "That will be delightful! Would you like some wine or beer? Would your mamma allow you to have any? I don't care for wine; but you shall have some, if you like."

"I think I would like a glass of dry sherry; very dry," said Theodore, who could not even yet surrender all his dignity.

"I don't know dry from wet. Alicia would know all about it if she were here, or Carpenter. But Jane shall bring the dryest she can find; so dry, Theodore, that it shall crackle!"

"Come now, don't chaff a fellow. You know what I mean. Tyrone likes dry sherry."

"Does he? I wonder does he like bread and jam?"

Theodore burst with laughter at the thought; but he knew how to pay a compliment too.

"I'm sure he'd like it if he were here now, and if you liked it. He thinks the world of you, Miss—I mean Jennie."

"You little flatterer! Well, you shall have the dry sherry all the same."

Jennie went into the cottage and presently returned, and after came a servant bringing a little tray with bread and jam and water, and some sherry.

"Now, Theodore, I hope you are hungry, and don't be ashamed to eat."

She set him an example by taking a slice of bread, covering it with strawberry jam, and biting boldly into it with her pretty white teeth. Theodore followed, at first a little awkwardly; but, after all, boys will be boys, and the love of jam rarely dies in good earnest before the dawn of the moustache. So Theodore, tempted by woman and fruit, fell like his progenitor from his high estate He ceased to be a man about

town and a west-end swell; he sat on the ground and devoured bread and jam and was happy.

Alicia found the pair at their extemporized feast, and the boy had plunged so deeply into folly that he had now hardly any shame left, and was little, if at all, confused by the appearance of another girl. Alicia was very pleasant and kind, although she had not by any means the qualities of a regular trump, which Theodore had so quickly discerned in Jennie. The boy lingered and lingered, staying finally to dine with the girls, although he was to have his own dinner at half-past eight; and Heaven knows how long he would have stayed if Alicia had not insisted that he must go home before the evening air had begun to deepen into twilight. He went home by train, saying before he left that his mamma and the young ladies must become regular chums; and he shook hands several times with Jennie at the gate, and gallantly kissed his hand to her as he hastened along the path to the station.

"What an odd, clever little boy," said Alicia.

"A dear little creature," Jennie exclaimed. "I am quite fond of him."

The day had been, on the whole, a bright and happy one for Jennie, but she felt depressed and sad at night. She had been a child while the sun shone. When the darkness came on it seemed to envelop her in a mantle of melancholy foreboding suited to drape a grown woman.

## CHAPTER XIII.

There was a dinner party in Denzill Street, in the hospitable house of Mrs. Granger. Half-past eight, and there were to have been eight guests—Mrs. Lorn, the Hon. Captain Cadsby, M.P., Mr. Maurice F. Tyrone, M.P., Mr. Prinker, M.P., Colonel Quentin, U.S.A., General Macan (service not clearly known), and the Misses Aspar (2). But early that day a message had come from the two latter that they must not be looked for. It was too late to get any other guests, and so Mrs. Granger merely had the arrangement of her dinner-table reorganized, and allowed the chairs each a greater space.

Mrs. Granger had succeeded in making the acquaintance of Mrs. Lorn, and through Mrs. Lorn had come the

acquaintance of the two military gentlemen from the United States. When Mrs. Granger could not, as sometimes in the case of gentlemen, easily form an acquaintance herself, she sent her husband out to organize it. Mr. Granger was a man who still looked quite young until you came very close to him, when you saw that the soft, fair, and womanly skin of his face was seamed with a perfect labyrinth of minute wrinkles, fine as though the point of a needle had traced them. He had yellow hair and a yellow moustache, and shaved carefully the rest of his face. He had some property, not a great deal. He had been in a cavalry regiment and had sold out. He was in Parliament once for six months and lived with a vague purpose of getting in again somehow, and so was almost as good as a Member of Parliament. He was a member of various societies and institutions, and was always ready to go on any deputation to any minister. He was believed to know a good deal about the colonies and also about sanitary legislation. He had once written a pamphlet. He belonged to several clubs. He always had on hand an alarm and a grievance. He was a good-natured, kindly sort of man, and rather liked to hang about women in a drawing-room, although he was not skilful in talking to them. He was fond of his wife, and quite content to be overshadowed by her, to do her bidding, and to acknowledge her absolute rule.

Mrs. Lorn and Mr. Prinker had arrived. Mr. Prinker stood in the drawing-room near the chimney-piece and talked to Mrs. Granger of the Reform Bill and the prospective ballot. Mr. Granger bent over Mrs. Lorn's chair and listened while she spoke of the opera and the appearance of the Princess of Wales. Mrs. Lorn's fine eyes were always wandering towards the door.

General Macan and Colonel Quentin were announced. They had come together in a hansom from the Langham, and Macan had paid the fare, observing, with a wink, "Out of the fund, my boy—expenses of organization." General Macan was splendidly got up. He had a stupendously-worked shirt with an emerald blazing in the front of it and a black waistcoat trimmed with gold-lace, and he seemed to float in perfume. His companion was a little overdressed, but tame when compared with the gallant General.

Mrs. Lorn turned pale when Quentin entered, and at the very threshold a glance of his eye rested upon her. Quentin went up to his hostess with a bearing which would have been

gentlemanlike but for a certain dash of military swagger, and spoke a few words to her and to Mr. Granger, and then fell back against the chimney-piece.

"How are you, madam? How's your health? Delighted to see you," said General Macan, bowing profoundly and making a flourish as if he were waving a cocked hat. "Talk of the fogs and smoke of London now! I don't know where one sees beauty like that of a London lady." Another bow to point the compliment. "And how are you, sir? Delighted to see you looking so well, Mr. Granger. Give you my word you're growing younger every day."

This was addressed with extended hand to the gray, elderly, and alarmed Mr. Prinker, who recoiled.

"*This* is my husband," said Mrs. Granger, sweetly, as she presented the host, who was hesitating to interpose.

"Of course it is," said the unabashed Macan; "and well he's looking too. What a droll mistake of mine. I beg pardon, Mr. Granger, and I beg pardon too of my esteemed and worthy friend, whose name has just escaped my memory."

The Hon. Captain Cadsby arrived and made for his hostess, and chattered a few words at her and then backed away, having said "Aw! How do?" to the florid greeting of General Macan.

The party did not seem to weld together very harmoniously. Cadsby did not like the strangers and Mr. Prinker made up his mind to keep clear of them. But then Cadsby thought Prinker an old pump and Prinker thought Cadsby a young cub, and both thought their host a decided bore. Colonel Quentin had now engaged Mrs. Granger in talk, and she was smiling at him graciously and thinking what a very handsome and distinguished man he was. General Macan was already expatiating to Mrs. Lorn on the superb beauty of one of her bracelets. So the host and the other two guests hung about the room awkwardly. Mr. Granger many times sought counsel and command from the eye of his wife, but what with Colonel Quentin's talk and her anxiety for Tyrone to come and complete the party she was too busy to think about her husband, and Granger was therefore left helpless and purposeless.

Tyrone came at last, and the moment he entered the room he wished he had not come, for he knew that he was late and he saw that Jennie was not there; so he made up his mind to get away at the earliest possible moment. He looked

handsome and weary; he did not show any surprise at the presence of General Macan and Colonel Quentin, but he may, perhaps, have felt a little.

Tyrone had the honour of taking his hostess in to dinner; he felt glad somehow not to have to sit beside Mrs. Lorn. Mr. Granger, of course, took that lady. Colonel Quentin sat at Mrs. Granger's left; General Macan on the right of the host; Captain Cadsby and Mr. Prinker faced each other. The dinner was small but well served. The wines were good, but poured with, not at, discretion. General Macan once tapped the table with his knife-handle and then touched his glass to intimate that he stood in need of champagne.

"Have you seen my nieces lately, since I last saw you?" asked Mrs. Granger, of Tyrone.

"I had the pleasure of seeing one of the young ladies—the younger."

"Jennie? Oh yes, isn't she pretty, isn't she very pretty? But not so sweet as Alicia; oh no, not so sweet; I do think Alicia so sweet! But I like Jennie best; Jennie is a dear bright creature. Don't you like Jennie best?"

"Yes, I like Jennie best," said Tyrone, smiling involuntarily; "I know her best."

"Oh, a dear girl. But Alicia is very sweet. Oh yes, Alicia is very sweet." Mrs. Granger passed for being enthusiastic and earnest on the strength of her talking very fast and saying the same thing several times over. "Those darling girls, I am so sorry for them!" She kept to Jennie and Alicia as a topic, because she wanted to be seen talking confidentially to Mr. Tyrone.

"Their mother is dead?" he said, inquiringly, not meaning to ask "Is she dead?" but "Is that the cause of your grief on their account?"

"My darling sister—yes, oh yes. How I loved her! We adored each other; we were never separated, no, never for an instant, until—until she married. But it isn't that—I mean it isn't that alone. To be without a mother of course is dreadful—I have never been quite the same since the loss of my dearest mamma—but to have such a father!" Mrs. Granger drew her shoulders up so much out of her dress as she said this that she seemed to let them fall down into it again with quite a collapse when the shrug was over.

"She seems very fond of her father," Tyrone said, coldly, "and I think Mr. Aspar is a very respectable man."

"So kind of you! So good of you! Of course you would say so. Quite a respectable man, I dare say, in business matters—oh yes, of course. But a man in such a business! My darling sister! Who could ever have thought of it, so differently brought up—oh, so very differently!"

"Miss Aspar is not coming to-night?" Tyrone asked.

"No; I am so sorry. But he's suddenly taken ill, you know; and of course she couldn't come, although I dare say it's nothing."

"Who is ill, Mrs. Granger?" Captain Cadsby ventured to interpose.

"Mr. Aspar—the father of my pretty nieces."

"Very sorry to hear it. Charming girls; wish they were here."

"Dreadful business this about our coal," Mr. Granger, at his end of the table, observed to Mrs. Lorn.

"Indeed," said that lady, languidly, and vainly trying with her eyes to catch a glance from Tyrone; "I have heard nothing."

"Quite a dreadful thing!" the host hastened to explain, delighted to have a chance. "Our coal, you see—all the scientific men are agreed—is nearly exhausted, nearly exhausted! At the present rate of consumption it seems that the whole contents of our mines will be gone in—oh, well, in an awfully short time! Now England's greatness depends upon her coal—we all know that; can't be denied, you know. When her coal is gone, then——"

"Her pipe is out, of course," interposed the complacent Macan. "But don't you fear, old boy, and let old Mother England keep up her spirits. There's a land beyond the western wave, sir—isn't there, Mrs. Lorn? Aha! you bet!—where there's bread and coal for all! Pennsylvania, sir, Pennsylvania has coal enough to burn up all Europe in one big furnace, and the helps in Philadelphia wouldn't know that there was any missing the morning after. Isn't that so, Quentin? Said I well, old boy? We'll send coal to Newcastle before long, and it will be no work of superero—what's his name, neither. Here, fill this glass, wont you?"

"What is the superficial extent, may I ask, of the coal in Pennyslvania?" Mr. Prinker gravely inquired.

"Ninety-five millions of miles, sir," replied the bold Macan. "No, I'm wrong; I was thinking of the distance of the earth from the sun. It can't be quite so much as that. Let us say

twelve hundred thousand square miles in round numbers all told, and going down right to the centre of the earth."

"Your friend is a humorist," said Mr. Prinker, withdrawing from that arena of conversation and turning to Colonel Quentin.

"He comes from Mr. Tyrone's country," said Quentin, "and is privileged to indulge in imagination. But I can tell you something of our American coalfields." And he began to give Mr. Prinker some really valuable and interesting information, which soothed Mr. Prinker, who was beginning to doubt whether he ought not to feel offended at the style of General Macan's remarks.

"Are you in favour of woman's suffrage, Mrs. Lorn?" Captain Cadsby inquired.

"Woman has had great wrongs," Mrs. Lorn answered, raising her dark eyes, and, so to speak, calmly flooding Cadsby with their light, and then letting them droop again with a floating side glance at Tyrone. "She has suffered deeply; but I do not venture to say that the political vote would be the best weapon with which to win back her long-lost freedom."

"As to women voting," said Mr. Granger, "it seems to me quite an alarming thing—quite alarming. The mind of the country is becoming unsettled. I'm told the effect on some of the constituencies is perfectly bewildering. You don't know where you are. I saw a man yesterday, great parliamentary agent and all that, and he says you can't believe the extent to which one's calculations are unsettled."

"Oh no, please don't say so," Mrs. Granger interposed. "I'm quite enthusiastic about the movement myself, quite enthusiastic." Mrs. Granger had become converted to the principles of woman's rights by the fact that two or three ladies of title had lately taken up the agitation, and a sort of avenue to aristocratic acquaintanceship was thereby beginning to be opened up to energetic ladies without title.

"And so am I, madam, so am I," said General Macan; "I'm for woman's rule in everything, and more too. 'There's all we know of heaven about her,' says the poet."

"But the women who go about in that sort of way are so ugly," pleaded Cadsby.

"Prejudice, my dear fellow, prejudice! You just come to Boston, Mass."

"The Boston ladies are all bone and double eyeglasses," said Mrs. Lorn, viciously. "I am proud to be a Southerner."

"There's good people down South, Mrs. Lorn, and lovely women! Eh, Quentin? You are of Arcadia too; you come from the South. Quentin's heart was riddled through and through by the Southern beauties; it's like a tunnel, ma'am, it's so hollow."

Tyrone was growing weary and was very glad when the ladies rose. He opened the door for their departure, and as Mrs. Lorn passed she poured forth the dark light of her eyes fully on him, and, in a pathetic little whisper, said:

"You will not stay *too* long?"

He had no opportunity of answering.

The gentlemen drew nearer to each other.

"Claret, eh?" said Macan. "No, I don't care about claret. If you'll just order in another bottle of champagne, Granger, my boy, I'll drink it; and you needn't look alarmed at my eccentricity. It's you're eccentric, my fine fellow. Champagne after dinner is drunk in lots of countries."

Mr. Granger shuddered, but ordered the champagne.

"Here's the old flag," said Macan, lifting a foaming bumper to his lips.

"I can't understand what you Irishmen want," said Mr. Prinker, continuing a conversation just begun with Tyrone.

"Can't you?" Tyrone replied coolly. "I'll give you a problem to consider. If you find that you really can't solve it you may give up the thing; you never can understand us."

"Oh, you can't understand us anyhow," Macan cried. "You haven't any poetry in you; the Saxon hasn't. You can't comprehend the Celtic nature. We can't always comprehend it ourselves for that matter."

"Your problem, Mr. Tyrone?" Prinker urged, quietly ignoring the irrepressible Macan. Cadsby was listening to a description of Western buffalo hunting from Colonel Quentin.

"Try," Tyrone said, "to realize in your own mind a conception of a man who, although perfectly sane, intelligent, and honest, does not believe that there is any inherent or heaven-born right in England to govern Ireland—bring yourself into the condition of mind which can understand the possibility of such a man being honest and rational—and then we can discuss the question further."

"But I don't see any grievances."

"I haven't talked of grievances and you haven't tried my experiment. Think of the possibility of a man being sane and yet objecting to the rule of an English parliament."

"You see we are a practical people," said Mr. Prinker, with a smile.

"Very good; and we are not, if you like. Therefore we don't care to be disposed of on what you call practical principles. To be practical means, in common language, to understand your own business only, and that merely for to-day. The practical man is Ego, and no to-morrow."

"Things are becoming very alarming, though, I am told," said Granger. "A man tells me that Fenians are everywhere; in our great cities and in our docks."

"Does any one believe in Fenians?" asked Colonel Quentin, waking up.

"I don't," said Tyrone, "for one."

"Are there any Fenians?" Quentin asked.

"Devil a one," replied Macan, with a chuckle.

"I don't believe there's anything in it," said Cadsby; "it's all nonsense."

"I am not so certain," said grave Mr. Prinker. "The Lord-Lieutenant, you know——"

"Here's his jolly good health," interrupted General Macan.

Mr. Prinker collapsed.

"Shall we join the ladies?" said Mr. Granger, hurriedly, for although he had received special orders from his wife to be very attentive to the two distinguished American officers, he still could hardly quite bring himself to accept the ways of General Macan, and was further puzzled by observing a half-sardonic smile now and then on the lips of Colonel Quentin.

"Your friend is overdoing his part," said Tyrone to Quentin, as they left the room together. "He had much better try to play the gentleman."

"He's playing no part now," Quentin answered, coolly. "You see the genuine Macan—Macan off duty—rattling and happy. Men have to work in great enterprises with colleagues worse than Macan, Mr. Tyrone. He has a much cooler head and readier brain in a moment of trial than I can pretend to."

"I don't believe in such workers or work," Tyrone protested, almost vehemently.

"Reserve your judgment until to-night; then decide for yourself," Quentin carelessly replied.

This little conversation took place as they ascended the stairs, and was unnoticed by any one save the two engaged in it.

Tyrone and Quentin were hardly two minutes behind the other guests in entering the drawing-room. Yet the gallant Macan had already succeeded in planting Mrs. Granger on the piano-stool and persuading her to sing. Now this was not a successful performance. Mrs. Granger once had a fine and powerful voice, but everything had left it long since save the power. All the shades and edges had been worn away, and only a powerful scream now came out. Mrs. Granger hardly ever sang of late, not because discretion admonished her of her imperfections, but because it was not genteel for a lady to entertain her guests with her own performances. But she could not resist the conquering Macan. His compliments carried her metaphorically off her feet. Had Macan been introduced to her as a gentleman from Liverpool or Dublin she would have set him down at once as a low-bred, vulgar, impudent fellow, and turned her back on him forthwith. But a foreigner, though only an American, was privileged to say almost anything; and the title of General was a new charter of leave and licence. So she sang for General Macan, and got fluttered at his compliments. The singing was loud, hoarse, and hard, and the songstress made terrible exhibition of shoulder-blades and a thin back.

"Delightful!" the General exclaimed, clapping his hands. "Give you my word, Mrs. Granger, you whip Grisi out of her boots! I've heard Grisi and Jenny Lind at Castle Garden, if you ever heard tell of the place, in the old times—Castle Garden, New York, you know, down there by the Battery—and she was like one of the angels out of the skies. But she was nothing to you."

"Who's that fellow at the piano?" Captain Cadsby asked of Mr. Granger. The house in Denzill Street was one of those places where every guest seemed instinctively to do and say as he and she liked, without any particular consideration for the feelings of the host and hostess. People seemed to know that they were asked because their presence was a sort of favour, and they demeaned themselves accordingly. Mrs. Lorn, who had never been there before, hardly troubled herself to speak to the hostess, and only tolerated the host. Tyrone, the most careless and good-natured of men, and to whom, in the very extravagance of his Irish pride of birth, all persons without grand old family names seemed to stand on precisely the same level, thought the Denzill Street ways well nigh insufferable, and thought what a profound pity it

was that a sweet creature like Jennie Aspar should have such relatives.

So Captain Cadsby coolly and frankly questioned Mr. Granger about the latter's guest.

"Ho! ah, well, really I don't exactly know," the host replied. "Mrs. Granger met him somewhere. Very distinguished man, I'm told; eccentric, perhaps, in manner."

"Very," said Captain Cadsby, and presently took his leave and wondered what Mrs. Granger meant by asking him to meet such a fellow.

When Tyrone entered the drawing-room an appealing glance from Mrs. Lorn compelled him to approach her, and an almost imperceptible, yet significant, touch to her dress at one side invited him to sit beside her. She looked very handsome and melancholy.

"You have not come near me all the evening," she said, languidly. "You have left me to these people. I am weary of this; I want to go home. I wish I had not come. Who are these people?"

"The Grangers? Very good people, I believe; I don't know a great deal of them."

"She is the aunt of those beautiful girls I saw the other day. Why are they not here? Jennie is delightful; I know all about Jennie, your favourite. Do you know that you have a rival there?"

A sudden uncontrollable flicker of expression on Tyrone's face answered this touch.

"But don't be alarmed; it's only Theodore. The child raves about her. Tell me all about her. What is she like? Isn't her father a pawnbroker or something in town? Is she at all, is she—oh, you understand what I mean—is she ladylike?"

"I am not much of an authority on the manners of polite society," Tyrone replied, rather sullenly. "To me she seems a perfect lady, and to be unconscious of her own good qualities."

"Now you are vexed, I know; I see a little red spot growing on your cheek. But I was only trying to vex you as a punishment for neglecting me all the evening and not coming to see me for a long time—ever so long. Mr. Tyrone"—and she became suddenly serious and dropped her voice—"I beseech of you to beware of that man."

"Of Quentin?" This latter was now at the other end of the room, sipping coffee and listening to Granger discoursing of international law.

"Of Colonel Quentin, yes. Mind, I know nothing bad of him—my dear mother loved him when he was a child—but he is restless, daring, and reckless."

"I have no fear," Tyrone replied, carelessly. "I don't gamble and I don't speculate."

"There is a fascination about him——"

"Is there? I can't say that I have observed it."

"There is to men, I mean; I was not thinking about women; I was thinking about *you*. There is a fascination to men in his restlessness and his daring. He will draw you into something if he can. Do you think I don't see the dangerous parts of your own nature—the heedlessness and love of excitement?"

Nothing can be more flattering to an ardent young man than to be told by a beautiful woman that she has studied his character and found just those qualities in it. But Tyrone's mind was a little out of tune with Mrs. Lorn's to-night. He was thoughtful, preoccupied. He only thanked her and assured her he ran no danger of any kind.

"Suppose I tell you that you *do* run some danger, and that I know it?" she said, in a low and earnest tone. "Suppose I tell you that I know all about the scheme you are engaging in and its chances? Perhaps I know more than you do yourself."

"That's quite possible," Tyrone answered, with a smile, "for I know hardly anything. But there's one thing certain, Mrs. Lorn, I shall engage in no scheme which has in it any mystery for me or danger for others."

She threw herself back in her chair, looked vexed and sullen for a moment, and then began to talk of the opera, for she saw that Colonel Quentin was looking at her,

This all passed while Mrs. Granger was singing.

"Now, ma'am," the gallant Macan exclaimed, "I owe you one, and I'm going to pay my debt on the nail. I'll sing you a song that often cheered some of our boys as we sat round the camp-fire and passed the Bourbon—the whisky, I grieve to say—the night before a big battle. You haven't got the music here, I daresay, but you'll soon catch the idea, and you can rattle up some sort of an accompaniment offhand, I'll be bound. Here goes."

Macan fell back a pace or two from the piano and eyed it sternly as if he were measuring a distance. Then he threw out his chest once or twice and coughed, a cough that meant

clearing of throat and something like business. Then, in a mellow and indeed a magnificent voice, and with a good deal of genuine dramatic energy, he trolled forth a sort of modern version of the "White Cockade," interspersed with allusions to Fontenoy and Fredericksburg and having many references to the flag of green and the stars and stripes. The bewildered company were taken wholly by surprise. Nobody ever expected this sort of thing. Several evening-party guests had arrived by this time, some actually entered the room while these native woodnotes wild were filling the air, and it was curious to notice the scared kind of expression which showed itself on the faces of those late-comers. If they had found Mrs. Granger's drawing-room in the possession of a band of Ethiopian serenaders, or a crowd of Guy Fawkes mummers they could hardly for the moment have been more surprised and disconcerted.

Even the hostess was weak and faint in her thanks to the volunteer singer when the song was over.

"It wants a chorus, you know," said General Macan; "in fact it's nothing without a chorus. You should have heard the boys take it up."

Mrs. Granger tried to intimate with a smile that she should have liked of all things to hear the boys take it up.

"I wish I had a fiddle now," the irrepressible hero went on, looking eagerly round. "I suppose you haven't such a thing as a fiddle in the house? Doesn't Granger play the fiddle? Oh, you ought to make him learn. There's no instrument in the world comes near the fiddle. You should hear *me* with it; I flatter myself I can play! But I've a call now. Let me see. Some young lady will favour us; some young lady with a singing face! They've all singing faces, I think."

"I can't stand any more of this," Tyrone said, to Mrs. Lorn. "I must go. Good-night."

"You are not angry with me?" she said, gently detaining him. "I wish to be your friend. I will try to be, even though you don't encourage friendship."

"I am deeply grateful, always; I am, indeed!"

"And you will remember my caution?"

"Surely, if there should be any need of caution. But so far there really is none."

Mrs. Lorn sighed gently, and slightly shrugged her beautiful shoulders.

As Tyrone was edging his way out Colonel Quentin spoke to him.

"It will soon be time to go *there*. I must get Macan away now. Where shall we have the honour of calling on you?"

"I am going to the House," said Tyrone, "and shall be found either there or at the Reform Club."

"May we send in for you?"

"Certainly. Why not? I don't know that there is any need of mystery."

Tyrone was a little, just a little, haughty in his manner.

"Not so far as I am concerned, certainly," Colonel Quentin replied. "I am an American and my share in the business may be placarded at Charing Cross for anything I care."

"And mine too," said Tyrone, "for anything *I* care. I am not a conspirator, Colonel Quentin."

"Not yet," muttered Quentin, as the descendant of seven centuries of rebellion bowed and went his way.

## CHAPTER XIV.

In one of the central and populous districts of London there runs a long, rather broad thoroughfare, which, although almost absolutely unknown to the country visitor, or to Londoners living in other districts, might form the main street of a good-sized provincial city. The houses were once accounted stately and spacious. Nobles and statesmen lived there even so lately as Evelyn's time, nor had it wholly lost its character when Swift and Harley walked London streets. Then it fell into shops, and now the shops themselves have degenerated to almost the lowest grade. The upper window-frames of many a house where small coals and potatoes are sold below display the remains of ornamentation which the hand of a Wren may have designed. Some of these upper rooms are still spacious and with a lingering look of dignity about them, although a clothes-line stretched from one end to the other bears a load of miscellaneous drapery, visible to the street outside, and which makes it plain that the occupant of that part of the house lives by taking in washing. Out of some of the highest windows dirty children are hanging over for a glimpse of the pavement, and are amusing themselves by dropping potato-peels or bits of cabbage-stump on the wayfarers below. These children make the unaccustomed passer-by hold his breath and tremble, for he expects to see them come toppling down upon the pavement. But they are

used to the condition of things, as the Swiss children are used to walk on the edge of a precipice, and they never fall over. It is not thus that the numbers of the infant population are diminished there.

This is summer weather, and the windows are open. Where there are not children, there is to be seen at each upper aperture an unshorn and unkempt man, in his shirt-sleeves, smoking a pipe, or a woman in what Mr. Pepys would call her smock-sleeves and bodice, who has stopped in her household work to have a look at the street. A good many windows, one is surprised to see, have flowers in pots, and some have birdcages. This is not a vicious thoroughfare—only overcrowded, dirty, and poor. The shops may be easily classified. Small coals and potatoes, a butcher, a pawnshop, a dining-room—with a pudding like a cannon-ball, and ever-steaming, sickening meats—a tripe shop, a shop for the sale of sweetmeats, cheap toys, ballads, and little story-books, a bakery, a carver and gilder's, and several public-houses—some of them having concert-rooms, and exhibiting tempting prints of a comic singer with a battered hat, and a young lady in evening dress.

There are several lanes or courts, and at the corner of one of these stands the Harp of Erin public-house—a rather large establishment, with a painted and faded sign on the front wall representing a dishevelled and largely developed female figure, clad in green, and allowing her hair to fall over a gigantic lyre, the chords of which it drapes like the long moss that trails from the branches of trees in a forest of the Carolinas. In the windows of this hostelry are little printed bills, announcing that the raffle in aid of the funds of the St. Dermod Sick and Burial Society is going on every night during the week.

We have been describing this place by daylight, but it is night when we get there. A hansom cab stops in front of the Harp of Erin, and Mr. Tyrone and Colonel Quentin leap out. Both are in evening dress, and look oddly out of place there. Tyrone has a light coat thrown over his other clothes, but Colonel Quentin stands out lithe, swaggering, brilliant, in his black swallow-tail and white tie. It is late now, and there are few people about.

General Macan had gone on before to prepare for their coming. They enter the bar and ask for him. He comes down in a moment; there are sounds of laughter and

applause and many stamping feet in a large front room on the first floor.

"The raffle's going on above, full blast," the General says. "The room's very full, and you'll not care to pass through it. I'll take you to the committee-room at once. Show us the private way up, Tim."

Tim, an Irish barman, with his shirt-sleeves tucked up, and who had just been showing and descanting on his brawny muscle to an admiring customer with a blackened face, striped trousers, and a banjo, opens a door behind the bar, and tumbles up a flight of narrow stairs, which leads to a corridor. At the street end of this corridor is the room where the raffle is going on; at the other end is seen a door with panes of glass in it, which are hung inside with a curtain of green baize. When Tim has conducted them thus far, he leaves them.

General Macan then leads the way, Tyrone follows; Colonel Quentin, smoking a cigar, comes last.

Macan opens the glass door without any ceremony, and Tyrone enters. There is no secrecy and no precaution.

"Shut the door after you, Phil," the General says, carelessly. And Quentin, entering, shuts the door.

They are in a tolerably large room, lighted with gas. The floor is uneven in many places, but the remains of decaying cornices, and even some misty traces of a painted ceiling, show that it was once a handsome and stately apartment. There is a round table in the centre, looking small when compared with the size of the room, and the table is strewn with tickets, checks, papers, account-books, all having reference to the St. Dermod Sick and Burial Society. The walls are hung with bills describing the grand piano, the silver watch, the accordion, the railway season-ticket, the arm-chair, the oil painting, and the other treasures which are to be disposed of for the benefit of the charity. Several men are seated round the table; two or three are lounging in chairs which they have tilted back, so that the chair stands on its hind legs, and the head of the sitter touches the wall.

"Gentlemen," General Macan proclaims in grandiloquent style, and with one hand proudly outstretched, "I have the distinguished honour to introduce the descendant of the great Tyrones—the heir of ages of rebellion—one of the real Princes of Erin."

A burst of applause followed, and the men all rose to their

feet, and received Tyrone with a perfectly Oriental prodigality of bows and homage. Some colour came into Tyrone's cheek—he had vanity enough to be pleased with all this for the moment. But he had come to observe, and his quick eye took in every feature and form at a glance. He did not fail to notice that one man was much less profuse in his welcome than the rest, and that after one formal bow, he instantly crossed the room and engaged in conversation with Colonel Quentin. This man was evidently a foreigner. Tyrone noted his spiked moustache and his quick gestures. He was well-dressed, and looked like a gentleman.

Not so the others. The majority were of the class who might have kept small shops in the neighbourhood, and the Irish accent rolled off their tongues. The two or three who lounged in the chairs were obviously Irish Americans, and probably had been soldiers. They were loose-limbed, bold, and athletic, with a certain swagger. But the whole gathering had little about it of that air of joyous heedlessness which is the common atmosphere where Irishmen are in the majority. There was a vague suggestion of sternness, or even of ferocity, about them.

"Gentlemen," one man exclaimed, "we welcome our natural leader! Tyrone for ever! Begor, and 'twas time you come among us at last!"

He caught Tyrone's hand and wrung it, and there were tears dancing in his wild eyes.

"Glory be to the Powers that we've lived to see the day!" another cried. "Here's the young chief in his true place! We'll carry him at the head of us yet!"

"Another cheer, boys, for the bold Tyrone!" a third voice exclaimed, and there were fresh plaudits and stampings, and Tyrone's gloved fingers were squeezed in many a successive grip.

Tyrone was a little taken by surprise, but not much. He had lately begun to suspect the true nature of the important association of Irish and American patriots which Macan had persuaded him to visit. Heedless as he too often was, he had taken this step deliberately and with his eyes open.

Now he waited coolly until their excitement had somewhat soberized. Colonel Quentin eyed him keenly; so did the foreigner who stood beside Quentin.

"Gentlemen," said Tyrone, in his clear, frank voice, that had something sympathetic and winning in it, "I am always

delighted to meet my countrymen. I am Irish, heart and soul—I think I have always shown that. But I don't claim to be a leader of any Irish movement. I hope Ireland, God bless her! has wiser heads to guide her, though I think she can't have many more faithful hearts. But I must plainly tell you that at present I don't even know what your movement is, and I can hardly say whether it is my place to lead you until I know whither you want to be led."

"Oh, begor, it isn't a Tyrone that'll want any teaching on that point," remarked one of the audience, with a wink.

"Explanation only spoils this sort of thing," said General Macan, jauntily; "we'll tell you all about our means, Colonel Tyrone, but about our ends, oh, sure, as Lord Byron says, 'I beseech you to suppose them.'"

"Excuse me, General Macan," said Tyrone, coldly, "and pray let me remind you once more that I hold no military rank. I must have the clearest knowledge of what your objects are before my name is given to help them. Gentlemen," he added, with a certain simple dignity, "I have nothing to give to any cause but my name. It is my last and only possession. It is your possession indeed as well as mine; it is a poor part of our national history. It shall not be given away lightly. What then do you want of me?"

"But this is absurd——" the foreigner broke in. Quentin checked him.

"Don't you know what you've been brought here for? Didn't the General tell you?" several voices exclaimed, some in blank wonder, some in angry remonstrance.

"General Macan is not to blame," Tyrone said; "I refused to receive any explanation from him. When he told me of some great patriotic association, I thought a Tyrone had a right to know something about it. But I refused to be instructed by him. I preferred to see some of my countrymen face to face."

"That's true as Gospel," Macan observed, "but I took it for granted you knew all about it."

An uneasy condition of mind began to show itself, and people looked angrily at Macan, who only whistled a tune, and bore the complacent mien of one who waits until a little becoming comedy of formula has been got properly through. He assumed that all this on Tyrone's part was only like the feigned reluctance of a singer who wants pressing.

"Come," said Tyrone, "let us not be formal. Let us sit down round the table, and talk the matter agreeably over. We are all Irish here, I suppose?"

"Or friends of Ireland," quietly observed Colonel Quentin.

"Or friends of Ireland," said Tyrone, very slowly; and studying the faces.

"There are sometimes family councils where the offices even of the best friends are a little out of place. But Ireland has not so many friends that she can afford to shut out any. Well then, we are all Irishmen here, or friends of Ireland. What do we propose to do for Ireland?"

"Set her free, by God!" exclaimed a stout fellow, bringing his fist down with a bang upon the table

"By what means?"

"With the pikes in good repair!" sang out Macan's mellow voice, and a fierce burst of applause followed.

"Then you are trying to organize a Fenian rebellion?"

"Devil a doubt of it!" exclaimed Macan; and there was a fresh roar of approval.

"Then," said Tyrone, rising, "all I can say to my countrymen is to warn them against such insane projects. If there is only one here with whom the name of Tyrone and its old memories has any influence, I beg of him—I implore of him—to have nothing to do with this! It will only end in a few miserable deaths and a national disgrace."

"Disgrace!" one man cried. "Does a Tyrone call it disgrace to rebel against England?"

"No!" Tyrone answered with an equal vehemence, "I don't—although I believe in my soul that the English people only want to be our true friends. I don't call rebellion disgrace. The traditions of centuries are not so soon forgotten. Just now I believe it would be a crime, but not a disgrace. But I don't call your Fenian scheme a rebellion. I don't give that the name of a rebellion which will never call for even one charge of cavalry to put it down."

Angry murmurs followed.

"Be easy, boys—easy, now!" said the self-satisfied Macan. "Just let me explain. The condition of things is changed, Mr. Tyrone. Look across the ocean, sir! Think of the hundreds of thousands of Irishmen there. Let me show you some of our figures and facts——"

"Do you take me for a fool, or a New York serving-woman,

General Macan? I know the value of your facts and figures. All the world ought to know what they mean. I want to hear no more from you. I only warn my countrymen here against you."

"He's in for a Government place," growled one voice.

"Turned tail, by thunder!" one of the Irish Americans exclaimed.

"Be gorra, he's in the Government pay already!" some one else cried out. "He's a spy! Shut the door!"

Several hands hastened to make fast the door. The ferocity of panic was beginning to set in. The men crowded round Tyrone.

"One's life isn't worth a cent here," Colonel Quentin coolly remarked. Then he called out in a clear voice, "Gentlemen, we can't convince Mr. Tyrone; but I am sure he will promise that if he is allowed to go—I am sure he will give his word of honour not to disclose anything he has seen or heard——"

"I will pledge myself to nothing," Tyrone answered, vehemently. "If I go out of this place alive, I will go out as free and unpledged as I came in. I will promise nothing. If it seems to me right for the interests of Ireland, I will denounce all this at the next police-station. You may murder me, but you shan't get any promise from me."

The terror of premature disclosure has always been, and for good reason, a sort of overmastering panic among the humbler class of Irish conspiritors. The men in the Harp of Erin who now gathered round Tyrone were almost beside themselves at the thought that they were to be betrayed to the police. Not personal fear influenced them alone, but the thought of the frustration of their plans. Through many a rude, fierce mind the suggestion flashed that a trial and conviction for murder would not disclose the conspiracy; that Tyrone's dead body might convict his slayer, but would not betray the cause. A ring of furious faces was quickly drawn around him, and the Irish Americans significantly put their right hands behind them for their revolvers. Tyrone stood with perfect composure, unarmed, defenceless, well knowing defence to be out of the question, but resolute and quiet, with all the brave blood of his race sustaining him. For a moment his life hung upon a chance, a word, a glance—only for a moment.

"Easy, now—easy," said the gallant Macan, elbowing his

way with a careless roughness through the circle, shouldering this man out of the way and dragging another back, until he came side by side with Tyrone. "No, you don't! Colonel Tyrone came here with me of his own will, trusting to my word; and he's going out of this of his own free will too, just whenever he feels like it. Na'ry promise, na'ry pledge! I never asked for any promise when I brought him in, and by the immortal Jupiter, he shan't be asked for any promise when he's going out! Fall back, every mother's son of you! I reckon I'm in command here. Any fellow that just steps one inch nearer to Colonel Tyrone will save his wife the trouble of cooking his breakfast to-morrow morning, and afford her the pleasure of seeing how she looks in a widow's cap!"

General Macan lent additional point to the humour of his conclusion by presenting the barrel of a very elegant silver-mounted "six shooter" for the inspection of the angry group.

"Come, that's all right and pleasant," the General continued, when the murmuring and sullen circle had dispersed. "I'm always in command when business is on, and any fellow that don't feel like obeying, would do well to arrange beforehand for his favourite pattern in the matter of a coffin. Bad luck to ye all! Do you think Owen Roe O'Neill was in the habit of assassinating people, or that Wolfe Tone would have shot an unarmed man on sight? I'm ashamed of you! All right now, Mr. Tyrone; the boys are sorry, and they'll never do it again. They didn't think of themselves just for the moment. Well for them that Macan has brains enough to think for all."

"General Macan," said Tyrone, "I thank *you*, and I esteem you a soldier and a gentleman."

Macan's eyes flashed with delighted pride. "See that, now!" he exclaimed. "Praise from a Tyrone. By the immortal Jupiter——"

"But Mr. Tyrone," said the foreigner with the moustache, now entering into the conversation, "will know how to make excuses for the anxiety of men who have a great cause—the cause of Ireland—in their hand, and who cannot stand on ceremony."

"I have not the honour of knowing you, sir," Tyrone said, coldly. "Is the cause of Ireland in your hands?"

"I serve Ireland as Mr. Tyrone's ancestors served France. My name is perhaps not unknown to Mr. Tyrone. I am General Charette."

"I thought as much," Tyrone replied, who had for some time suspected that he saw before him a famous conspirator and military adventurer known to many countries, a stormy petrel of political revolution, a cosmopolitan rebel who had begun at the barricades of July, fought under Garibaldi in 1848, and under John Brown in Kansas; was one of the thousand of Marsala, and was "out" with Langiewitz in Poland, a brave, restless, irrepressible, self-conceited, and feather-headed sort of man, whose instinctive notion of a Government was something like the nine-pins in a game, something that strong and skilful men were to try to overturn. Established institutions anywhere were to General Charette what a butterfly is to a child, irresistibly tempting to all the destructive faculties. This was just the sort of man to whom Tyrone had an inherent objection, and, in part, perhaps, an unreasonable objection, and his demeanour now probably showed some of this feeling.

"Does Mr. Tyrone mean to imply——?"

"I don't mean to imply, but to say, very distinctly, that I think the cause of Ireland would get on better if it were left in the hands of Irishmen, and not mixed up in the *mélange* of the Revolution, as you, General Charette, would call it. I would earnestly urge my countrymen to keep out of all that, and to avoid all professional and trading Revolutionists."

"But this is insolence!"

Tyrone reddened, but took no notice of the words. He had turned to leave the room, and only stayed to deliver this parting injunction.

"The cause of Ireland is not that of mere revolution. It is the cause of national freedom, and nothing else. The less we have to do with strangers the better."

"It is time," Charette almost screamed, planting himself straight before Tyrone, and staring him full in the face, "it is time that strangers should cease to fight for Ireland, when the descendants of her old leaders are too much coward—coward!—to fight for her."

This was too much. Tyrone had been fighting with passion of one kind or another all the night. He flung all self-command away, and, with his gloved hand, struck General Charette in the face. The General went down like Dante when Francesca's story smote him.

He was up in a moment with Quentin at his side, and a little crowd round him. Charette was pale with passion, but

much calmer now than before, and he talked to Quentin with fierce subdued eagerness. General Macan abruptly threw his arm under Tyrone's to lead him away.

"Oh, by the immortal Jupiter!" he exclaimed, "this sort of thing will never do. We'll be having a free fight here if this goes on any further. It's a pity you lost your temper, Colonel Tyrone; but I confess the General was a little too cheeky for the patience of an Irishman. He's a vindictive devil, too, that same Charette, and there wont be much good come of this. I suppose there's no chance of your apologizing?"

"To him—to that insolent scoundrel?"

"Oh, by the Lord Harry, come away, do."

"I ought to apologize to you, Macan," Tyrone said, good-humouredly, "for getting into a quarrel here, and I owe an apology to myself for having made myself ridiculous."

"Well, as to that, I don't know; it's the genius of an Irishman always to be making himself ridiculous. But I don't like this quarrel at all, and that's an odd thing, too, for people tell me I haven't much objection to quarrels as a rule. Come away, Colonel, it's all over—for the present."

Tyrone, escorted by Macan, went down stairs and quitted the Harp of Erin. All the tumult in the room he left was now stilled. General Charette was pale and calm, and he still talked in an undertone with Colonel Quentin.

Tyrone jumped into the cab which was waiting, and drove away.

General Macan returned slowly to the committee-room, whistling meditatively. When he entered he took Quentin aside.

"This is a bad business, Phil! I wonder if the Head Centre could do anything?"

"The Centre of Gravity," said Quentin, "couldn't do anything with our friend yonder. He says he will kill Tyrone, or Tyrone shall kill him. I think he means it, too."

"It's been a muddle," Macan observed, with a shake of the head, "an awful muddle."

"I don't think so,"

"Well, there's this row—and then he'll never go with us anyhow."

"Tyrone?"

Macan nodded assent.

"I tell you he shall; and he will easily enough, if you only play your cards well."

"I don't see it, Phil."

"Don't you? *I* do."

"Let's have some champagne," Macan said, "anyhow; I want a drink. I'll stand—it's hard if the St. Dermod Sick and Burial Society can't afford a drink all round. How many of us are here? Eight, nine, ten. Never mind. I'll pay for all. Give a pull to that bell, Phil, and then we will have a talk about business."

## CHAPTER XV.

It would not be easy to overrate the disagreeable nature of the reflections with which Tyrone awoke the next morning. The manner in which he had been drawn into a knowledge of the Fenian plot greatly embarrassed him. To allow the thing to go on would, in all probability, only end in a miserable little abortive outbreak—and yet how to stop it in time?

An English reader will say at once that Tyrone's course was clear. He was a member of Parliament, and had vowed allegiance to the Sovereign of Great Britain. He had no right to become a party to the concealment of a treasonable plan. He was bound to reveal the whole affair.

But the English reader must be asked to endeavour to look at all this from Tyrone's point of view. He came of a race in whose annals rebellion against England had been always esteemed a sacred duty. He was himself entirely opposed to all such projects; partly because he believed them utterly hopeless, but also, in a great measure, because he was honestly convinced that the great mass of Englishmen, including even most of the governing classes, were now anxious to deal justly with Ireland. Still, an Irish scheme of rebellion did not appear to him unnatural, or necessarily criminal. It was an enterprise of which he disapproved on every ground, but he could not pretend to any instinctive and loyal horror of it. On the other hand, the idea of turning over Irish rebels to English police was repugnant to every feeling of his whole soul. Even when he said to himself that for the dear sake of Ireland, for the sake of the very Irishmen concerned in this affair, it would be wise and well to destroy it by premature disclosure, his nature revolted against the thought.

More than that, he could not disguise from himself that

he must have been, unconsciously and innocently, the means of fostering the delusion under which some of these men were acting. His humbler countrymen, especially across the Atlantic, evidently misunderstood his attitude in Parliament, and looked to him as a natural leader of rebellion. He remembered with a certain pang how thoughtlessly he had accepted the part of Irish chieftain, revived and adapted to modern usage; and he felt as if he was a sharer in the folly and the wrong of those very enterprises which now shocked him with their rashness and their barren danger.

The best thing he could think of, at least for the present, and as a first resource, was to endeavour to persuade Macan and Quentin of the madness of the enterprise. He had heard, too, of a mysterious Head Centre, a sort of hidden Mikado of Fenianism. He would endeavour to see this man, and to convince him.

These thoughts were complicated now with the unpleasant recollections of his unlucky quarrel with the Frenchman Charette, whose eternal enmity he had of course incurred; and then his own personal embarrassments were daily growing greater and greater.

Tyrone usually breakfasted at his lodgings and then went to his club. He was just about to go out this morning, when a card was brought to him from Colonel Quentin. On the whole, he was glad to have a chance of speaking to Quentin at once, for though he rather disliked the man, yet he saw that there was some sense and capacity in him.

Colonel Quentin entered, elegantly dressed in black frock coat, fawn-coloured trousers, and lavender gloves, with a superb camellia in his button-hole. Tyrone received him with a civility perhaps less cold than usual.

"I have come on unpleasant business, Mr. Tyrone," Quentin said, in his clear, somewhat sharp voice; "a kind of mission I would gladly have declined. But it was pressed on me by my friend General Charette."

Tyrone could not help looking up with a surprised expression.

"I see you anticipate my business already, and I'm very glad of it, for it relieves me from the necessity of much explanation."

"Still, if you please, Colonel Quentin, we'll have a little explanation."

"If you wish it, certainly. My friend General Charette

feels deeply insulted and aggrieved by your action last night. You are not surprised at that, Mr. Tyrone, I am sure."

"Your friend, if he is so, Colonel Quentin, was grossly and purposely insolent; and when men are so, they generally get beaten, don't they? I confess I am very sorry——"

"I don't know," Quentin said, with studied slowness, "I don't know, Mr. Tyrone, whether it is fair to you to allow you to go on. Excuse the interruption, but I really don't think it would be handsome in me to allow you to go on."

Tyrone generally encountered what seemed to him rudeness by a little extra politeness, and thus rebuked it. When Quentin interrupted him, he bowed and listened in perfect silence.

"Because, Mr. Tyrone, I fear General Charette thinks the thing went too far to admit of apology now."

Tyrone smiled slightly.

"If you will do me the favour to listen, Colonel Quentin, you will find that the question is not likely to arise. I was going to say that I am sorry, indeed very sorry, for having allowed myself to be drawn into any sort of quarrel with a person of that stamp. The man you call General Charette is only, I presume, a better sort of brigand."

"Pardon me. He really does or did hold a commission from the military authorities of the United States."

"Indeed? I am sorry to hear it. Well, Colonel Quentin?"

"Well, sir, General Charette insists on having proper satisfaction rendered to him."

"A duel, Colonel Quentin?"

"I reckon it does amount to that, sir," Colonel Quentin answered, gravely.

"People don't fight duels in England now, Colonel Quentin," said Tyrone, with a smile. "They are rather out of fashion. They are—I was going to say, an impossibility here—at all events, they would be considered an absurd anachronism."

"So I am told, sir. But General Charette does not consider that he is bound to adopt the English fashion, and submit to an insult."

"Your friend does not know what he is asking for," said Tyrone, still with a smile, which he could not repress. "He is asking me to make myself ridiculous. Do you know, Colonel Quentin, that if I were to comply with his wishes, I should be the laughing-stock of London? Even if I were

fortunate enough to be killed, not death itself could make the thing serious enough to save me from an epitaph of public ridicule. I should be buried with all the honours due to a wild Irishman."

"My friend knows England, Mr. Tyrone, and was not unprepared for this view of the question. But he thinks—and you will allow me to say that I think too—you had no right to inflict an intolerable insult upon a stranger, and then shelter yourself behind the usages of English society to deny him satisfaction."

"But it was your friend who gave the first insult. Could you, Colonel Quentin, have borne such insolence?"

"Well, sir, I don't say that I could. But then I should have been ready to see the thing out. I am a Virginian, Mr. Tyrone, and we haven't yet, thank God, wholly lost the ways of manhood down in Dixie! If a man doesn't mean fighting, he ought to keep to words. If duels are out of fashion in England, blows ought to be! You might have answered him with, 'You are another!'" Quentin said with his peculiar smile.

Tyrone rose and walked uneasily up and down the room. There was a stern logic in all this, undoubtedly; and he was an Irishman, and had been brought up in France, and had actually, in his wilder days, fought a duel in the woods at Vincennes. But he positively shrank from the outburst of ridicule and contempt which a duel would bring upon him now in England. Let us do him justice, too. He thought of the ridicule and obloquy and misunderstanding that his action would bring upon his country. "Those Irish can never be civilized." It was characteristic of him that he had not yet remembered that, supposing he survived the duel and faced down the ridicule, the amusement would cost him, under the terms of the American will, some hundred thousand pounds.

Colonel Quentin sat patiently waiting. No quiver of emotion showed the personal and profound interest he felt in the matter.

Tyrone stopped suddenly.

"Colonel Quentin," he said, "you are a professional soldier, and, I have no doubt, a gentleman. I will speak with you frankly. For my own life in this sort of thing I don't care three straws. Neither do I care how my reputation as a man of some courage may suffer in the estimation of your principal. I come of a country and a family which, God knows, have

always loved fighting only too well, and my own character has, up to this, been marked, I am afraid, by recklessness rather than discretion. I don't care about that. But I tell you openly that I am very anxious not to bring public ridicule and contempt upon myself just at present. I think I can be of some service, perhaps, to Ireland, if only I can contrive to get some credit in the English public mind as a man of fair judgment and steady conduct. I want to retrieve myself in the world's opinion, not for my own sake. If I fight your friend, and the thing gets known—as it must get known—I shall be looked on merely as a hair-brained fool—one other evidence of the hopeless character of the Irishman."

"I don't see how this could be expected to influence General Charette," said Quentin, shaking his head. "This was all a very good reason for not getting into a quarrel; but it's hardly an excuse for refusing to bear your part in it when you are in. It won't wipe the shame of your blow off Charette's face, I guess, Mr. Tyrone."

"There's hardly any man in this country, Colonel Quentin, who would not in my place simply laugh at your proposal, and tell your friend that the kind of satisfaction you look for is as ridiculously obsolete in England as the ordeal by fire. Suppose I take this course, what then?"

"I can't suppose it. You are not English, but Irish."

"But still——"

"Then General Charette says he can have no alternative but to insult you grossly in every public place where he can meet you, and to brand the name of Tyrone—for the first time in its history, I guess, as that of——"

"Stop, sir," Tyrone exclaimed, breaking out of all self-control. "Don't venture to say a word further. Tell your friend that he shall have his wish. Make the arrangements for this foolery as quickly as possible, the sooner the better; and, for Heaven's sake, as secretly as can be."

"We thought of the French coast, somewhere between Calais and Boulogne."

"Anywhere; only let me know in time."

"And your second, Mr. Tyrone?"

"Second? Oh, confound it, must we have the mummery in all due form? Very well; let it be so. I can think of no one better suited than your friend, Macan. I haven't seen him, of course, but I dare say he will act for me, and that, at least, will keep the idiocy from having outsiders for

witnesses. Pray forgive me, Colonel Quentin, if I showed a little bad temper. You can have no idea of how society views this sort of thing in England."

"I dare say not," Quentin replied, contemptuously, "although I've been in New England, and I know what they think of man's honour in the nursery of woman's rights!"

Then Tyrone added, suddenly remembering the American will, and completely resuming his habitual sweetness of temper, now that the thing was settled and inevitable, "You probably don't know, Colonel Quentin, what an expensive amusement this is to which you are inviting me. Cleopatra's most extravagant banquet, dissolved pearls and all, never cost her a tenth of the amount. If you were my next of kin, you might have reason to grieve over the warlike propensities of your friend! Well, let us dismiss the matter for the present. Will you have a cigar? I think you'll find these pretty good."

"Thanks. Yes, this is good. Obliged to you, Mr. Tyrone, for your courtesy, every way. I'll see Macan at once, and I think we shall be able to report the arrangements all made this evening. By the way, your weapons? You are the challenged?"

Tyrone felt tempted, in his contempt and detestation of the whole affair, to suggest battle-axes, or two-handed swords. But he only said, "I'll keep to the old lines of the constitution, Colonel Quentin. People fought with pistols in Ireland when they did fight. Let it be pistols now for me."

Soon after the meeting just described, Colonel Quentin lounged into General Macan's room at the Langham. Macan was late, as usual, and was breakfasting in his bedroom, and finishing his toilette the while. His breakfast consisted of devilled kidneys, poached eggs, fried ham, and a more than liberal allowance of seltzer water and brandy. At intervals the gallant General smoked a cigar—or, rather, it should be said that he smoked a cigar, and at intervals applied himself, with vigorous efforts, to his breakfast.

"It's all right," Quentin said, carelessly.

"All right, is it? All wrong, I suspect!"

"Wrong or right, he'll fight."

"I thought as much—I knew you'd talk him into it. The old Irish blood. I don't like this, Phil."

"Things don't always shape themselves to suit our likings. We could hardly expect Charette to bear such an insult to please us."

"To please *us!* I'm thinking that it would give you little pleasure, Phil, if he didn't fight. What's your game in this? Is it the old jealousy, or what is it? Do you want to put Tyrone in the front of the fight, as King Solomon—wasn't it—put the other fellow—because of the woman? Is it our handsome Southern friend with the fine eyes that's at the bottom of all this? Oh, bedad! the petticoat is the source of all trouble just now, as well as in the days when old King Solomon spotted Bath—— What's her name?"

"You are wrong in three instances, Macan," said Quentin, lighting a cigar.

"Three instances. How is that, now? Wont you have some brandy and seltzer?"

"No; thanks. First it was not King Solomon; next, I am not putting Tyrone in the front of the fight; third, I am not in the least degree jealous of Tyrone, but, on the contrary, should be delighted to act as his best man, or to give the bride away at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, to-morrow morning,"

"Then what is your motive for driving on this fight? You have some motive in it—that's certain."

"Here comes Charette," Quentin said, as a quick tread was heard in the corridor. A tap at the door was answered by Macan, who opened it, and admitted General Charette.

Charette wore a blue frock coat as tight in the waist as though he had stays on; and, indeed, his prominent chest gave him somewhat the appearance, on a large scale, of one of the young ladies who dress up as princes or military officers in some of our burlesques. He had a white waistcoat, a pink tie, grey trousers, and varnished boots. The swelling bust and the slender waist gave him, at the first glance, an epicene, grotesque, and almost ludicrous appearance. But the broad, receding forehead, the large, slightly-flattened nose, and the flashing grey eyes, under the thick reddish eyebrows, removed any thought of the ridiculous. Any one might read there a history of restless and insatiable daring, self-sufficiency, and ferocity.

"I give you good morning, gentlemen," he said, in excellent English, with an odd little touch of French-American accent. "Have we news of Mr. Tyrone?"

"It's all right," said Quentin; "he'll meet you."

"Where, and when?"

"That we may arrange. He'll come anywhere, and at any time."

"Content! And his witness—his second?"

"To be sure—yes! I quite forgot, Macan, to say that he expects you to act as his second."

"Of course I will. I'm proud to be his second. Where should a Macan be but standing by the side of one of the real old bully-boy princes of Ireland?"

"I don't understand you gentlemen Irish Revolutionists, with your imaginary princes and your loyal sentiments," General Charette observed, leaning one arm on the chimney-piece, and tapping his boot with a silver-headed cane.

"Of course you don't understand us. How could you be expected to understand us?"

"But if you are for the revolution, why do you rhapsodize about your princes?"

"Why not, man? Didn't you ever read George Gordon, Lord Byron? and doesn't he tell how the Greeks liked to have their own countrymen for their masters, anyhow?"

"Republicanism has no masters."

"Only mistresses, maybe! Well, there's Republicans and Republicans, you see. I often think the Irish breed and your Continental breed don't pull naturally together in harness. I don't know that there isn't some truth in that notion of Tyrone's—that Irishmen ought to run their own revolution for themselves, without bothering with any foreign help."

"Not even American?" Charette asked with a smile.

"America isn't foreign, Charette, my bold soldier boy! America's a greater Ireland over the water, sir. Here's to the Star-spangled Banner, waving, by the immortal Jupiter, from Hudson's Bay to the Isthmus of Panama!"

"Well, I rejoice, myself, to hear that your young Irish prince has the courage of his insolence. Who succeeds to the princely title if—if there should come a vacuity—or a vacancy, or what is it?"

"No fear of that, Charette! I don't want to discourage you, but I shouldn't wonder if it was quite another pair of shoes. Tyrone's an awful good hand with the rifle and the pistol, I'm told; and I take it you're not much at that sort of work. Excuse me, but no true Frenchman ever was, you know. 'Tisn't your fault, man; and it's no offence to your country—God bless her! Every one to his trade. The sword's your weapon."

Charette looked angry, but made no direct reply.

"I have no fear," he said, contemptuously.

"Never supposed you had, old boy."

"And I will kill your Prince Tyrone if I can."

"Don't doubt you. I'm sorry for the whole affair. I've been partly the cause of it all, by bringing him there. Do you know, Charette, if anything should happen to Tyrone, I think you and I must have it out. The lad's blood would be on my head if I didn't have revenge for him."

Charette was about to render back some quick and angry answer, when Quentin interposed.

"One affair at a time, gentlemen, if you please; and besides, hawks really should not pick hawks' eyes out. You are wrong, Macan, in blaming Charette."

"Why did he call Tyrone a coward? Who did he think was going to stand that? Look here, Charette, let me give you a case in point. I got a ball in my shoulder on those blessed heights of Fredericksburg. I knew I must soon drop, and so I quietly began walking to the rear, saying nothing to nobody. Down below, whom do I meet, sir, but my own Colonel—I was only a Lieutenant then. 'Where are you going, Lieutenant?' said he. 'To the rear,' says I. 'Why the blazes don't you fight the enemy?' he roars, not seeing that I was hit. 'Because I can't, bedad,' says I. 'You're a coward!' says he. 'Twas my right shoulder had the ball in it. I out with my left fist, quick as a flash, and hit him right between the eyes. If I didn't, call me a New Jersey man—and my own commanding officer too. Deuce a care I cared—if 'twas General Burnside himself said *that* to me, I'd have just done the same thing."

"It's quite true," Quentin said, in answer to Charette's look of wonder; "I saw it. I think I am the only living man that did."

"Struck his Colonel, and in front of the enemy! But how did you escape the court-martial and the file of soldiers next morning—the volley and the fosse?"

Macan laughed.

"Bedad, then, the drollest piece of good luck ever you heard in all your life! Down he went—oh! just as you went down when Tyrone went for you. Up he jumped, all red and purple, and foaming at the mouth. Just at that moment there comes a shell; killed him as dead as Julius Cæsar, and saved me. Wasn't that providential? and don't I bear a charmed life, sir—like Macbeth?

'There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,' "

and Macan broke off into a burst of Dibdin.

"But that is extraordinary."

"It's true, all the same," said Quentin. "The children of the devil——"

"Are wiser than the children of light," said Macan, piously, and slightly confusing matters. "But the fun of it was, that I wasn't wise there, for I didn't know a bit about it until that evening. The moment I hit out I fell down—exhausted nature and the bullet in my shoulder—and I just fainted, for all the world like a school-girl. I came to in the hospital tent, and I didn't know, until Phil, there, told me of it, that night, that some kind-hearted shell from the rebels had saved me to fight another day. So take the warning, Charette, my Napoleonic hero, and remember that in me you carry Cæsar and his fortunes."

"Had we not better arrange at once for this meeting—since it must be?" Quentin suggested.

"I suppose we had," Macan replied, with a rueful look; "but I don't like it. I'm getting old, I suppose; for I don't ever remember before to have felt uneasy about going into a fight; and I don't like this."

"Your prince is in danger," Charette sneered.

"Devil a bit, sir!" replied the somewhat inconsistent Macan. "There isn't a Frenchman born, sir, that could kill the heir of the Tyrones!"

It required every effort of Colonel Quentin's decisiveness and coolness to keep this uncongenial pair of conspirators from plunging into an extemporaneous quarrel on their own account. Macan seemed as if he were doing his best to provoke his colleague, and perhaps only the bitter, burning memory of Tyrone's blow could have enabled Charette to retain some control over his temper. There did not appear much danger to Saxon rule from such an *entente cordiale.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

Tyrone surely had his hands, head, and heart full of business for the next day or two. The moment Quentin had gone, he stood up, and strode up and down the room hurriedly, as a man does when he has so much to do that he hardly knows where to begin, just as we see a pigeon hover

vaguely in the air for a moment or two with idly-beating wings, before it quite settles in its own mind which way to go. He resolved at all events to get out of the house as quickly as possible, and thus not merely avoid all visitors, but escape the chance of any inquiries on the part of the faithful Johanna, whose friendly interest in his affairs would be particularly inconvenient at the present moment.

Madame Pinel's sitting-room was a little back room on the ground floor, with its door hidden away at the end of the passage, and covered or protected by the stairs. As Tyrone was passing out he heard an odd murmuring or moaning sound coming from this room, and glancing involuntarily back he saw that the door was open, and that the little girl he had brought for shelter there was seated on the carpet, murmuring to herself some faint little song. She was a wonderfully quiet and obedient child, on whom suffering and poverty had set a premature stamp of passiveness and patience. When bidden by her mother to go with Tyrone, she had gone without a murmur. She would sit with Madame Pinel, and talk with her all day long, and Johanna was gentle and tender with her, but she seemed rather to shrink from the noisy and healthy children, and did not care to play with them in their high and remote nursery, or to walk with them and their nurse in the neighbouring park. She was a blue-eyed and yellow-haired little maid, and Johanna declared that the truth of her mother's story was written on her face—"a Tyrone all over."

Tyrone went into the little parlour and spoke to the child, whose quiet face grew bright to see him. "Are mamma and papa coming soon?" she asked. It was curious to observe how—perhaps in obedience to some caution from her mother—she never would say a word of papa and mamma to any one but him.

"I hope so."

"Papa will soon be quite well?" she asked, looking up wistfully.

"He will soon be quite well," Tyrone replied, and was glad then to get away, after asking the child a commonplace question or two, where Madame Pinel was, and so forth.

For he was then going, first of all, to see the child's father, who would soon indeed be well—quite well. Tyrone had gone every day, and now all would soon be over. He had gone, and Madame Pinel had gone. With great difficulty his

cousin's wife had been prevailed on to receive Johanna, and they had a doctor, and nourishment, and everything—— too late. Indeed, the physicians assured Tyrone that the patient had long been a doomed man, that disease had sentenced him to death, even if poverty and over-work and excitement had not come to its aid. They were all only waiting now for the inevitable end. An almost profound composure had settled down upon the unfortunate wife of the dying man. She was cool and calm in demeanour as a hospital nurse.

Tyrone as yet knew hardly anything more of her story than he did at first, except that she had shown him several old letters addressed by her husband's father to the man now fading—letters at which Tyrone barely glanced, having indeed no doubt of the truth of what she told him. He had asked her no questions. Once she said, "I'll tell you all—everything—some other time—when—when—" And he stopped her from trying to go any further, and was content to wait. The patient had never been conscious since Tyrone came near him, and so the promise to take care of his child could not be made. The man—the other Maurice Tyrone—lay there in the most strange and touching state of feeble unconsciousness. He could hardly be said to rave, he only talked in a low tone of "Margaretta," his wife, of "Mattie," the child, and of places far away.

"He will last out this day, perhaps even to-morrow," said the doctor to Tyrone, who met him just at the door this morning. Let it be said that the whole event had done something to thin the remains of the crisp bank-notes which Tyrone had drawn from Mr. Aspar.

Tyrone remained for a while with the wife. "I may not be able to come to-morrow," he said, "perhaps not even the next day," and an odd sensation passed through him as he reflected that he might perhaps never come at all; that the Tyrone lying there unconsciously awaiting his approaching death, might outlive the Tyrone who stood up, young, strong, and glowing with life by the bedside; "but Madame Pinel will come."

"There is nothing to be done; you have been better than I thought any one on earth can be. We have only to wait!"

Tyrone came out into the open air as one might come from a vault. To see the free light was in itself like the sense of a relief from oppression and pain. Then he called a hansom —he never could remember to be economic in the matter of

hansoms—and drove to the Waterloo railway station. For he was determined to go to the cottage on the Surrey common and see Jennie. He thought he ought to go in any case, having heard last night that her father was ill; and though of course he could have formally inquired after Mr. Aspar's condition at the Strand office, yet that formality would show but a poor and lukewarm interest. Besides, he thought to himself, "I may be killed to-morrow, and then what matter can it make?"

From this last observation it will be seen that our hero was excusing himself in his own mind for his purpose of visiting Jennie Aspar. So he was. He knew he was going out to Surrey to see the girl; he felt an uneasy conviction that he ought not to go, and he excused himself by saying that perhaps Charette's bullet to-morrow or next day might render further visits impossible. For the hour that he spent with Jennie by the little lake had been so delightful, that it had compelled him, amid whatever distractions, to think it over and over, and ask himself the source of his new and strange enjoyment. That first visit was but right and proper, and his meeting with her was accidental; and he had determined in any case, that after what had passed at Greenwich, he would not allow her (or anybody, he said, but he thought particularly about her) to suppose that he was going to marry Mrs. Lorn—hunting after Mrs. Lorn's fortune. But now that that was done, and he had set himself right in Jennie's eyes, he thought he ought not to go again; and yet he craved with inexplicable longing to see her again. "Am I falling in love with Aspar's daughter?" he put the question point-blank to himself; "Aspar, the money-lender? Am I falling in love with a pretty child, hardly beyond the years of a school-girl? If so, it wanted only that. Absurd! there can be nothing of the kind. I like Jennie Aspar, she is so fresh and innocent, so utterly unlike the women one meets in society. If I had a sister, that is just the sort of girl I should wish to hear calling me brother. No, there's nothing in it; she is too young and innocent, she never thinks of anything of the kind; the idea is absurd on my part; why should I not go? I may never see her again."

Tyrone had a great deal of pride, and a good deal of vanity, but both were traditional and ancestral rather than personal. He was weak on the point of his descent, of his cause and of his chieftainship, but he was singularly devoid of mere self-

conceit. He had none of that sort of feeling which sets young men fancying that every woman must needs fall in love with them. If, therefore, he thought he ought not to go out again to see Jennie Aspar, it was on his own account and not on hers, and this not selfishly but honestly; for it seemed a mean sort of thing thus to seek the society of a girl whose father one would not receive as an equal; it seemed dangerous to one's self to go too near a pretty girl whom one could not well think of marrying; but it never occurred to him that it was quite likely Jennie might fall in love with him and be made miserable. Perhaps if he had thought that Jennie's heart was in danger he might have held back and not gone. Or perhaps not! Perhaps his pangs of conscience might have been ever so much keener, and yet his eagerness to go only still more intense. Anyhow, he said to himself, now that the day after to-morrow might end the whole thing, there could be no harm in his seeing her once more.

What a wretched thing is any manner of small deceit to a nature quite unused to it! Tyrone had all his life followed openly his own whims and humours whither they led him. He felt somehow ashamed of himself and almost timid as he got out of the train and skirted the Common to make a civil inquiry about the health of Mr. Aspar.

The maid who opened the gate told him Mr. Aspar had been poorly in the night, but was better that morning, and had gone to town. The young ladies were not at home. Miss Alicia had gone into town—to Denzill Street—Miss Jennie had gone for a walk only. Both would be home to dinner, and Mr. Aspar too.

Tyrone left his card, and turned away, feeling rather more ashamed of himself than before; for the little social hypocrisy had been all for nothing.

He lounged slowly and idly on the Common, and took out his watch. "No train to town for three-quarters of an hour, and I have so many things to put in order, and letters to write."

A sudden strong gleam of purpose came to his relief. He turned his back on the railway station and the tall Victoria Tower rising on the far edge of the landscape, and bulking dimly out of a grey-purple haze; he directed his steps towards the little lake, thinking he should like at least to look on that again; thinking perhaps that—who shall say? The day was warm but obscure; perhaps a thunderstorm hung in those low, heavy clouds that darkened the horizon before him.

The gorse, the grass, the brambles, stood out with a wonderful clearness in the sombre atmosphere. Tyrone looked at the whole scene, the trees, the grass, the sky, with the half melancholy interest of one who feels that he has neglected to do reverence to the beauty of nature so long that perhaps repentance comes too late.

The lake or pool lay in a little hollow beneath the breasts of the gentle ascents one of which Tyrone was now mounting. He could already see the branches of the lonely Scotch fir which stood upon the islet. Presently he reached the height, and saw the lakelet and the tiny island, and there, seated on the grass, at the verge of the pool, her head supported on her hand, her side-face turned to him, was Jennie Aspar. The expression of her face, with its large motionless eyes fixed on vacancy, with the lips closely set, and the chin leaning on the small white, ungloved hand, was one of profound melancholy. Perhaps the melancholy was deepened in its effect by the slender and child-like appearance of the figure and the face.

Tyrone stood for a moment and gazed full of admiration and sympathy at that exquisite impersonation of youth and purity and sadness, set in the framework of that lonely and beautiful landscape. An unspeakable sense of exaltation seemed to fill his soul, and bear it away from himself and his own thoughts and purposes. A few lines of Heine's, unseen and unremembered for years, flashed upon his mind, and fixed themselves there, to be for ever identified with the memory of that place, that hour, and that figure.

> "Ein Mädchen sitzt
> Den Kopf auf den Arm gestützt
> Wie ein armes vergessenes Kind—
> Und ich kenne dich, armes, vergessenes Kind!"

He did not stop long to gaze, however, but went down the steps towards her, and the sound of his tread aroused her and made her look round. A change came over her face, as sudden as that which a voyager sees on mid-ocean in early morning, when suddenly, on the livid purple of the horizon, the sun seems to shoot up above the sea-line, and floods the sky with light. A deep blush came glowing into Jennie's face, the red colour mantled over her: she had to turn away for a moment to hide her face. Then she rose lightly to her feet, and came, still blushingly and shame-faced, to meet Tyrone.

"I called at the house to ask about Mr. Aspar," he said, "and as you were not in, and nobody, I came this way. I thought you might be here," he added, frankly.

"It was so kind of you to come." She did not know what else to say, and was still fighting with her emotion.

"I saw you from a little distance, and you were looking very melancholy."

"I *was* very melancholy."

"But Mr. Aspar is much better?"

"Yes, he is much better, and perhaps it was nothing; but—I don't know why—I have been making myself miserable all the morning with wretched forebodings. The sky seems to be hung in black, somehow."

"It *is* hung in black, now," said Tyrone, "and looks as if there were going to be a storm." He thought to turn her away from her reflections.

"Ah, but I don't mean that! Are there not some days when everything looks dark, and all the omens seem against you?'

Tyrone thought the present time looked very much of that kind for him. But he was resolved to be cheerful.

"Come, Miss Aspar, you are too much alarmed about your father. He cannot be seriously ill."

"I believe not—I hope not; but I feel so sad! No matter—it's nothing! It was very kind of you to come out here, and then to come to this place looking for me; and I don't mean to repay you by inflicting dismalness on you."

"But you couldn't repay me better than by showing yourself quite as your mood is, and treating me as a friend."

"I am sure you are a friend, Mr. Tyrone, and I don't think I have any other. But had we not better walk back? It grows darker, and seems likely to rain."

An embarrassment was evident in Jennie's manner, for she was thinking of her father, and that she was in a manner "breaking his hest," as Miranda did, by thus remaining in talk with Tyrone. But Tyrone was not inclined to go back just yet. He felt a certain purity of happiness in her company, and he thought to himself, "Perhaps it is for the last time!" So he still detained her, not unwilling to be detained; and they sat upon the grass, and he beguiled her into talk, and she gradually brightened. It delighted him to watch her sparkling eyes, and to see the smile break upon her red lips, and to note how, as she changed her position, her pretty little foot would show itself beneath the skirt of her dress.

There was something so fresh and unconscious in all her very movements, that it was a purifying pleasure even to look at her.

"How kind you are," she said, "to come here—out of the real world—and talk to me! I know you have remained here and set me talking purposely, because you thought I was miserable, and that it would do me good. And I *was* miserable, but I am not so now. But you—to come here—out of your real world!"

"Don't you know the delight it is to get out of that real world for a while?"

"No, I don't. My dream always is of the real world, and I look on you with wonder, because you have come from it. We have only lived here in a sort of cage, hung up on a tree, out of the reach of realities. I used to long for the real world, but sometimes lately I have begun to think that when real life finds me—if it finds me—it may be a sadder thing than I expected. I have had bodings to-day of the real world, Mr. Tyrone."

"Tell me what they told you of."

"Vague things—disappointments and the vanishing of illusions, and hard struggles, and loneliness, and something terrible—like death! Oh, I wish my father had not kept us here caged away in such stupid and helpless ignorance! But I am not going to talk of that. What do you think of my real world? Is it like——"

"It oughtn't to be like your real world; although loneliness and disappointment are realities enough for most of us, and death. But what have you to do with that sort of thing? Your reality ought to be brightness, and hope, and——"

"Yes, and what?"

"And love, Miss Aspar."

The word came out involuntarily, and Jennie's cheek burned; and Tyrone wished he had not spoken the word.

"See," she said, "how dark and darker it grows! and listen—thunder!"

"I must take you home," said Tyrone, springing to his feet. "Give me your arm."

He drew her arm within his, and they hastened across the common. He had longed more than once to ask her if her real world should need a friend to think of him. But he remembered his helplessness and his present danger; he thought of what a day or two might bring. A whimsical

memory came over him of Don Cæsar de Bazan and his love-plight just before his expected execution, and his vow, "The rest of my existence" (presumed to be some half-hour) "I devote to thee!" So Tyrone made no offer of friendship, and would not yet admit of any other feeling while things seemed so desperate. But he could feel the throbbings of *her* heart as they hurried along, the thunder now crashing, the lightning blazing around them, the rain beating into their faces, and he was conscious of a longing that if he were to die she might remember him.

When they reached the gate of Jennie's home they were both drenched with rain. But Tyrone would not stay, or enter; he pressed her hand and hurried away. He hardly heeded the rain which beat upon him as he strode towards the railway station. When he reached his lodgings he found a note from Macan to inform him that they two were to cross to Calais, while Quentin and Charette were to go to Boulogne, the evening of the next day.

That same day, while Tyrone and Jennie were hurrying through the storm, a grim piece of Fate-work was enacted in the shop where Mr. Joseph Aspar had his collection of art treasures and curiosities. Mr. Aspar had come to the place from his Surrey cottage rather late, and alarmed the faithful Carpenter very much by his haggard looks and wild demeanour.

"Look here, Carpenter," he whispered, with a scared face, "I've seen him. I've consulted Dr. Plymley, and I'm marked out for death! He says I may live a year—if I keep my mind in perfect repose! Repose, Carpenter; and I'm ruined! And my little girls: my Jennie! They have nothing—nothing—nothing! Everything here is mortgaged, and the money is gone. Look here! I'm not a robber. I'm an honest man, Carpenter, as you know. There's a letter for Mr. Tyrone—it's an acknowledgment of the money I have belonging to him. Give him that if he comes while I am out to-day. But if anything should happen—anything, you know what—then you'll find seven hundred pounds in my little leather writing-case at home—I put it there to have *it* safe any way, for I'm not a swindler—and be sure you give it to——"

His face writhed in a sudden convulsion.

"Air, Carpenter, air! Open that window; no, help me to the door. I can walk—I'm not dying yet!"

Then he gasped, stretched his hands wildly out, like a man

groping in the dark. Carpenter caught him as he was about to fall.

"I'm dying, Carpenter! Jennie!"

He screamed her name with all his last strength forced into one spasmodic cry, and then all was at an end. He might have lived a year if he could but have kept his mind in repose! That "if" was his sentence of death.

This scene took place in a little office screened away at the back of the great shop—a little den which Mr. Aspar rarely occupied, but into which he had hurried that day, dreading to attempt the flight of stairs. Carpenter and one or two clerks brought him towards the air, not yet knowing that all was over. They laid him on a Louis Quatorze sofa. Immediately above the sofa a fine copy of one of Hogarth's pictures smiled in its broad and robust humour. Near the head of the sofa the Florentine Venus stood in her serene self-consciousness. Between the two intervened the Egyptian Sphinx. Such were the companions of the dead man. Humour completed the ghastliness of the sight; the presence of immortal beauty made more hideous the horror of distorted humanity; and the Mystery of the Ages seemed to gaze in wonder on that oldest of all mysteries, Death!

Next day Tyrone, preparing to leave England on his mission of anachronism, passed the shop and saw the shutters up. He went in, wondering and alarmed, and found Carpenter there, and learned all. Tyrone was deeply shocked and grieved. He forgot all about his own affairs for the moment in the thought of Jennie's loss. Then he learned for the first time that Mr. Aspar had lost and muddled his money away in vain efforts to grow rich that his daughters might be ladies of fortune, and in heaping them meanwhile with useless luxuries, as if they were already such. He learned that every article of property in the shop and the cottage was pawned for debt, and that those and the insurance on Mr. Aspar's life would clear off the liabilities, and leave the daughters nothing but the clothes they wore.

"How did the girls bear it?"

"It was strange," Carpenter said. "Miss Jennie bore up much the best, although, perhaps, she felt it the most. She didn't cry so much. She went about the house, and tried to arrange things. Miss Alicia was quite broken down. She did nothing but cry, and was like one out of her mind."

"Do they know all? Do they know that they have been left nothing?"

"Miss Jennie does: she began to suspect how things were, lately, sir. She hasn't told Miss Alicia anything yet."

"And they have really nothing? no property, no money?"

"Nothing, I may say, sir. We have found in his desk seven hundred pounds in notes. He told me the day he died —just before his death—that the money was there, and he was going to tell me whom it was for when——" and Carpenter broke down.

Now, Carpenter had little doubt that this money was Tyrone's. Neither had Tyrone. The men avoided each other's eyes. Both were meditating a fraud.

"Oh, I beg pardon, sir!" said Carpenter, "my poor master! he did leave *that* for you, sir, yesterday, but I quite forgot."

And he handed Tyrone the letter addressed to him. He felt sure that letter contained an acknowledgment of the money.

So it did. Tyrone read it, avoiding Carpenter's eye. Then he said, in a rather constrained voice—

"Poor fellow! he was trying to settle some affairs for me, Carpenter, and he was attentive to the very last. I owe him much gratitude for his kindness; I only wish I could do anything to repay it. My cigar is out, and I have a wretched habit, Carpenter—I must smoke when anything troubles me."

There was a little jet of gas always burning in the back room where this conversation went on. Tyrone folded the letter he held into a narrow strip, and lighted it at the flame. He lit his cigar, and then watched the paper as it burned down; when the flame came near his hand, he let the paper fall, and saw it burn into black ashes on the ground.

"And all the young ladies have," he said, "is that miserable seven hundred pounds?"

"That's all, sir—if they have that. I suppose it was put there for them."

"Of course it was—what else could it be?"

"If nobody comes to claim it——"

"Yes, yes—to be sure! But nobody will, you may depend upon it. It was for *them*."

For a moment the two men looked at each other. They knew that they were parties to a fraud.

"I have to leave town this evening for a few days," said Tyrone, hastily. "I hope I may be allowed to visit the young ladies when I come back." He said to himself, "Perhaps the better word would be, if I come back."

An unconquerable instinct or impulse compelled Carpenter to put out his hand. Tyrone gave it a frank and manly grip, and the two conspirators understood each other. There were tears in the elderly man's eyes; he winked and blinked in the sunshine as he stood at the door, and looked after Tyrone, who hurried away.

Tyrone went on with a heavy heart and a remarkably light purse. He had, as we know, drawn three hundred pounds from Mr. Aspar a few days before, and the remains of this sum was now all his stock in hand. But he was not thinking about that; nor was he thinking now of the expedition he had to take. Its danger in nowise affected him. Tyrone had that vigorous, vital nature which makes men sceptical of death. Although he had mentally corrected himself a few moments before when he spoke too confidently of his return, he had really no more faith in the possibility of his being killed than he had in the extinction of the world. Such courage as that is, of course, not the highest and most heroic. The highest is that with which a commanding spirit conquers the frail physique which would tremble at danger, and the too impartial judgment which says, "I, too, am mortal, and my death will probably come of this." That highest courage was not Tyrone's. Not many very lofty qualities indeed were his. He was only a young man, with a generous heart, and a manly, sweet nature, spoiled much by circumstances and education, and now honestly trying to regenerate itself. He was not depressed on his own account now. He was thinking only of Jennie Aspar: of her youth, her beauty, her goodness, her grief, and his own miserable inability to serve her.

## CHAPTER XVII.

THERE are quarters of London—chiefly, perhaps, in the West Central district—where many elements of the picturesque still abide, unnoticed by the careless eye, and absolutely invisible to any eye during the monotonous fogs and grey mists of winter. They are to be discerned at any time rather at

the backs than at the fronts of houses. A new comer to one of these regions looks out of his window any day during winter, and sees only dreary little oblong patches of soil believed to be gardens beneath, and some tiles and chimneys weakly striving with the fog above. This is not enchanting, and he soon ceases to look at such sights at all. But the spring comes. It brightens and brightens, and our West Centralist sees with amazement a field of unexpected objects bursting into view. Yonder is a queer, red-tiled cottage, with a positive fruit garden behind it, and with latticed windows in its roof. Hard by is the spire of an ancient church. There is a trim, neat-shaven garden, with girls playing croquet; here are tall, broad-spreading trees, with birds among the branches. A garret window is open not far off, and a boy stretching out claps his hands and sends a flight of pigeons streaming across the sky. Two or three gardens off there is a man in his shirt sleeves, with an axe in his hands, positively chopping at the limb of a tree. Close your eyes, and, what with the sound of the axe and the caw of the rooks and the cooing of the pigeons, you might fancy yourself in the greenwood. Even with your eyes wide open and staring, there are green leaves, red tiles, quaint old roofs, fantastic and ancient windows enough to fill the field of sight with the picturesque. But all this you never saw or suspected during the winter, for the good reason that the fogs of the commonplace winter covered it.

There are many human characters that are like those odd West Central landscapes, having a good deal of the picturesque amid commonplace surroundings, and concealed, perhaps, for ever from the eyes of observers by the dull mists of a weary routine existence. Possibly the character of Jennie Aspar's father was one of these. It is not an unfitting repose, that which he takes now, as he lies dead beneath the marble goddess and the painted satire and the sphinx. Never man seemed more commonplace than he—in one sense, never man was naturally more commonplace. But his life had always had its goddess and its sphinx. He had lived, struggled, schemed, cajoled, and cringed for one purpose, and he died for it. The meanest of natures in many ways, he was almost sublime in his utter unselfishness. He had a sort of genius, too, in his idea of the way to do things—a sort of genius, only it did not succeed. He had loved his wife with an affection that had reverence in it. She had come down to his

sphere like a goddess to a man, and she had always shown contentment there; never even implied, by a word or glance, that she had come down, and Mr. Aspar thought his life would have been well spent merely in adorning her life and making it rich in gifts. She died, and then his one object became the elevation of his daughters—of *her* daughters. To make them ladies he lived. He surrounded them with all manner of luxuries, that they might be used to such things when the crowning of his pains should come. He had them educated well, and made them understand all things that an English lady ought to be able to talk about. He secluded them away in Surrey that they might have no acquaintances but such as he could choose for them and bring to them. His grand idea was to make himself useful to young men of family, not as the vulgar money-lender does, but as a faithful and confidential friend might do. He had advanced large sums on a word of promise without a scrap of writing, and often without a penny of interest. Some of his clients wondered and were puzzled. Many supposed that he was "deep," and was making money out of them somehow. Others set him down as eccentric—a word which to certain minds explains everything sufficiently by declaring explanation impossible. Others thought he did all for the honour and pleasure of rubbing skirts with the aristocracy.

Mr. Aspar was very cautious about the young men of family whom he brought to his house. His girls were too pretty to run any risks with. His general idea was to present to the mind of some generous young fellow this vision: —"Here is a lovely, educated, and pure girl, with all the manners of a lady; here is a father who does not pretend to the ways of society, but who has the soul of a gentleman; who was a friend, and more than a friend, to me in my difficulties, and who, evidently, would be quite willing to keep himself in the background. How could I do anything better than marry the girl?" The first step, the first girl married, would, Mr. Aspar felt convinced, settle all. The unmarried daughter would be taken under the shelter of the married "lady," and receive the benefit of her social position, while *he* would proudly and gladly efface himself altogether. He did not even ask the reward of seeing his daughters ladies. He only wanted to make them ladies; to know that it was so; that his task was accomplished.

When chance brought Tyrone in Aspar's way, the specu-

,ating father thought he saw peculiar hopes there. He did not think it likely the young man's affairs could be irretrievable—young men naturally are extravagant, even in their confessions of ruin: he had heard, too, something of the great expectations which overshadowed Tyrone's life. Now, this seemed a splendid chance. Tyrone was a man of undoubted position, and even with a kind of mythical family dignity, a sort of semi-fabulous royalty about him. His wife might go anywhere. Then, on the other hand, he was poor, and it was not likely that any daughter of the English aristocracy would be given to one who was poor and half a rebel. He was handsome, he was reputed to be generous ; he might one day be rich. There was a time when Mr. Aspar would gladly have given his daughter to a man of family were he never so poor. But that time was when his own money-making was at its zenith, and that time had gone for ever. When Tyrone came to Mr. Aspar's house, the task of the latter had grown terribly severe, for he wanted rank and money too. That was a cruel bargain he had now to drive with fate. Who in England would give the old lamps of family and fortune for the new lamps of beauty and youth ?

Mr. Aspar did not lay much account by Tyrone's extravagance or the follies and even vices which were imputed to him ; young men would be young men, he thought. There are no Josephs to be found among the youth of Belgravia. Indeed, perhaps, Madame Potiphar was not very good-looking. Dearly and devotedly as Mr. Aspar loved his daughter, yet he could not lift its soul out of its sphere, or contemplate marriage with any higher view than his clients in Belgravia assigned to it. A man amuses himself first, then he sows his wild oats and marries—that is all the natural sort of thing. He had seen many and many a marriage turn out to all appearances perfectly happy, the preliminaries of which he had himself helped to arrange, by advancing the money which was to pension off the favourite, who would thenceforth be superfluous if not inconvenient. Therefore, although he fully believed that Tyrone was guilty of follies infinitely worse than could fairly be laid to our hero's charge, Aspar cared little about that until he found that Tyrone's great expectations were so little worth. Then, when he found out all, a positive terror seized him. He trembled at the thought of a continued acquaintance between this handsome, brilliant, reckless, ruined young man, and his romantic, eccentric little Jennie.

Meanwhile his affairs had gone steadily from bad to worse. Usually the money he advanced was made good to him, as debts of honour are paid. But one young man of high rank, who was within six months of accession to a magnificent fortune, died of dissipation prematurely, and left no acknowledgment of his debts, and Mr. Aspar lost all that money. Another turned out such an utter scapegrace that his father, still in the prime of life and not at all likely to die, renounced all communication with him, and the youth actually went into the Austrian service and was killed at Sadowa, Mr. Aspar's money perishing with him. Mr. Aspar then tried a speculation or two and failed; he mortgaged his shop, its contents, his Surrey cottage, everything he had in the world, to meet his liabilities. For this man who had been dealing with spendthrifts, and prodigals, and profligates all his life, was austerely honest.

Then he saw that his whole scheme was shattered into pieces. He had no longer any faint shade of a hope. He was only trying to retreat; he was in constant agony lest the retreat itself should be a failure and a tragedy. His mind became haunted with unreasonable and morbid alarms, chiefly in connexion with Tyrone.

At last he consulted a physician, and found that he had for a long time been practically under sentence of death. With perfect quiet of mind he might yet live a year, he was told. He knew that his mind would never be at rest again while life remained to him, and in the spasmodic, despairing agony of the thought, he died.

The ruined man was laid in earth, and no one ever knew, save the faithful Carpenter, what the game of his life had been, and the forfeit; what he had lived for and died for. Not even the sad lustre of defeat hung over his obscure grave.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Tyrone and Macan walked slowly along a patch of shore in the early dawn of a summer morning. The sky was grey as yet, and the water looked livid beneath it. There were no waves, but the whole volume of water seemed to pulsate, seemed to be lifted and withdrawn by profound alternate throbs, so that every other moment a heavy, solemn fall was heard upon the beach. The tide was nearly at the full.

The strip of beach along which they paced was enclosed within two outstretched arms of the clayey cliffs that rose high above them. It would not be easy to climb those heights. The soft and crumbling nature of the soil would have defied the craftiest cragsman. The whole coast here was lonely; the nearest village of any kind was two miles off. The place was nearly midway between Boulogne and Calais, and seated between these two points of attraction to tourists was naturally almost as safe as a cottage which stands between two buildings provided with lightning conductors. But this little spot had another and a peculiar advantage for the purpose to which it was now turned. When the tide was full it was completely cut off from the shore beyond either arm of the hills which embraced it. The little patch of soil then resembled an arc, of which the high water line was the chord.

"They're late," said Macan, looking anxiously along the shore; "and that's a droll thing too! Fellows are generally in good time for devil's work like this. If it was to do a real service to anybody now, I shouldn't wonder, but this sort of thing—"

"We are idlers," Tyrone answered, carelessly, "and can afford to wait. They couldn't, I suppose, have missed the way?"

"Not a bit of it. Sure, 'twas Charette himself pointed out the place, because of its convenience. Once the tide comes in there'll be no getting at us, except in a boat. He says he's had more than one little affair here before. Bedad, Mr. Tyrone, I sometimes wish the devil had him! I think you're about right as to these foreign Red Republicans. I don't know what business they have with us at all. What does Charette know or care about Ireland?"

"About, I suppose, as much as he knew of any other of the countries he has fought in—next to nothing. Poor Ireland! She only wanted that!"

"And yet now, do you know," Macan said, halting in his walk, and touching Tyrone on the elbow to induce him to face round—"do you know, Mr. Tyrone, there's something in what *he* says, too. You wont be angry? You wont take offence at what a blunt Irishman says, who never was much of a scholar, and isn't anything at all of a swell? I'm talking now to my Chief, he and I alone, and facing one another."

"Go on, General Macan, I am glad to hear anything you say."

"Well, then, I think it isn't any wonder we take up with foreigners when our own Chiefs desert us. 'Welcome trumpery for the want of company,' you know, says the old proverb. I think you ought to be with us! What do you want in the English House of Commons? Come and lead us! Think of the thousands—ah! the hundreds of thousands—that would rally at the name of Maurice Tyrone, and have to be argufied, and talked, and bamboozled, by the immortal Jupiter, to follow Felix Macan. Wouldn't it be better for you anyhow—ay, and for your soul, too, if you care about *that*—to risk your life for your country than in blazing away at that red-headed devil, Charette?"

Tyrone shook his head.

"No, Macan! My own life is my own. If this fellow were to shoot me to-day, the world would have no loss. I don't know that the average of humanity would not even stand a trifle higher. But if I encourage a rebellion, and bring scores and hundreds of poor fellows to death, the curses of their widows would be on my head, and rightly——"

"Oh, come, be easy now——"

"Rightly. Their lives would be spent for nothing. I tell you, Macan, you don't understand the state of things. You are concocting in America only a gigantic farce, with a tragedy at the end of it. Your rebellion hasn't a shadow of a chance even of making a decent appearance in the papers. I said before, and I tell you again, it will never exact of the Government one single charge of cavalry. If it did I might almost be satisfied, but it will not."

"Then has it come to this, that the Irish people are a race of cowards?"

"No, but they have no organization. No rebellion ever succeeds without local institutions to start from. Our people know it couldn't succeed, and they have no heart for it. You don't know Englishmen. You fancy the days of Cromwell are still in existence. We can have everything we want, or can fairly claim, by proving our case. There is not a fairer body in the world than the English Parliament, with all its faults. It only wants to hear the truth."

"I'm sorry to hear you talk in that way," said Macan "Bedad, it looks bad for the old cause of Ireland when a Tyrone defends the English Parliament. Fair! Just you

let your Parliament know that you've gone to a Fenian meeting and kept its counsels, and see how fair they'll be. Oh no, 'We'll never trust John Bull again, nor let his lies allure' "—and the General vented his dissatisfaction in a snatch of song.

"Here comes one of our men at least," Tyrone said. "I see Colonel Quentin scrambling over the height yonder."

"And only in time, too. The tide's nearly full; a few minutes more, and he'd have had to swim to us. But where's my bold Charette, I wonder?"

Colonel Quentin came along the strand with a cloak thrown over his shoulder and displaying his usual easy swagger. He touched his hat when he came near, and Tyrone acknowledged the courtesy.

"I am sorry to have kept you waiting, gentlemen," Quentin said, "but the fault was not mine. Now, first of all, will you kindly follow my guidance back over that height, for if the tide catches us here, we shall have an hour's imprisonment for nothing."

"But what about your French fellow? Where's Charette?" Macan asked, with open-mouthed wonder.

Tyrone, a good deal surprised too, thought it best to say nothing.

"I am the bearer of General Charette's apologies," said Quentin, composedly; "I mean apologies for his unexpected absence. Circumstances over which, I can assure you, he has no control whatever, deprive us of the pleasure of his company. Can't we have the explanation on the other side of that ridge of cliff? I don't care to spend an hour here trying to guess what the wild waves are saying."

"It's a matter of indifference to me," interposed Tyrone, "what has kept Monsieur Charette away, but I think Colonel Quentin might give us some clearer explanation than this about his absence. I don't care to play a part in a farce."

"No farce, Mr. Tyrone, I assure you. I was only anxious to save our time. General Charette is arrested."

"The devil he is!" exclaimed Macan. "Arrested for what?"

"Arrested by the authority of the British Government as a Fenian conspirator."

"They couldn't do it! they daren't do it!" cried Macan.

"Perhaps not, but I can assure you they have done it," Quentin coolly replied. "General Charette is now as fast in

prison, Macan, as we shall be fast here for the next hour, if we continue talking on this spot five minutes longer."

The tide was coming close on them, and even in the excitement of the unexpected news there was leisure to contemplate the unpleasantness of an hour's imprisonment on a small strip of sand. The whole party, therefore, hurriedly climbed over one of the clay reefs, if we may use such a word, which, stretching down from the wall of cliff that formed the background, embraced the little patch of strand whereon the duel was to have taken place. No word was spoken aloud, but Macan kept continually humming a tune, whistling, and muttering to himself as they were accomplishing their passage over. At last they were safe on the open strand, and could see at a little distance the narrow path winding down the cliff by which they had descended. The dawn was now glowing with long purple streaks across a sky-field of bright saffron. On the edge of the sea some fisher girls were already seen.

"Now then, Phil, tell us how and all about it!" the impatient Macan exclaimed.

"All that I have to tell is easily told. Somehow or other the British Government seems to have learned what was going on, for a descent was made upon Charette when he thought himself perfectly safe; he and his papers were seized, and he was carried off to prison."

"Can this be?" asked Macan, looking at Tyrone. "Can the British Government arrest men who are not British subjects?"

"Certainly, for taking part in rebellious conspiracies on British soil. I am not surprised at this; not in the least. All your fine plots are betrayed the moment they are ripe for betrayal. This ought to cure you of such folly, Macan."

"Then do you mean to say they'll try Charette and condemn him?"

"If they think him worth the trouble; I shouldn't if I were the Government."

"Charette is in prison," said Quentin, calmly pursuing the thread of his story; "and I think if I were you, Macan, I wouldn't return to London just now; it might be injudicious. You will find Paris a more agreeable sojourn about this time of the year."

"Oh, pshaw! You don't mean to hint that the Stars and Stripes can't protect a fellow? Old Uncle Sam ain't quite

played out just yet. No, you bet! If they touch me you'll find they'll drop me like a hot potato."

"Perhaps so; though I doubt much whether our folks would be at all disposed to keep you out of any such difficulty. It's all very well, Macan, to hint of Uncle Sam's Government standing ready in the background. That sort of thing may have an effect on the raw recruits of Fenianism; you and I know how much of his countenance Uncle Sam really gives you. Besides, even if you did get off in the end, the preliminary revelations might not suit you."

"They mightn't suit the cause, and that's what I'm thinking of. I'd rather like the fun of the thing myself. What do you advise, Mr. Tyrone?"

"This, and this only. Give up all this insane plotting and scheming, General Macan. I am glad with all my heart that this wretched thing has been exploded so harmlessly and so soon. I beg of you to let it be a warning to you; you are a good fellow and deserve better work. Go back to the United States and tell our countrymen there to serve the land which has adopted them; to help Ireland by making new homes and openings there for Irishmen, and not to add to Ireland's misery by exposing her to new wounds and to new ridicule. Dissolve your absurd Fenian organization——"

"Never, by the Almighty! Never while there's a drop of blood—" Macan was breaking into a wild exclamation, when Quentin actually put his hand upon his mouth.

"Pray no swearing, Macan! Mr. Tyrone talks good sense from his point of view and we ought to be obliged to him. Anyhow, we don't care for any Fenian oaths just now and here; Mr. Tyrone and I are only lookers-on. Take my advice, Macan, and go on to Paris until this little storm blows over."

"I suppose I'd better," Macan said, rather ruefully, as he took off his hat and looked at it as if it could lend him counsel; "I suppose I'd better. And yet, dog on my skin, as the Western fellows say, if I like it. It looks like leaving Charette in the hole; and, though I never much liked the red-headed thief, I hate the notion of seeming to run away and desert him. But I suppose I must go."

"You can't help Charette," Quentin said; "and your presence, I suspect, would rather injure him than serve him. Mr. Tyrone, I am sure, will see that justice is done."

"True enough. You're a big Indian, a Parliament man,

and all that; you'll not see poor Charette unfairly dealt with by John Bull, will you?" General Macan asked, turning eagerly to Tyrone. "You wont remember any little unpleasantness that may have happened between you at such a time?"

"Oh, Charette is safe enough," Tyrone said; "they will probably only keep him in until this whole affair is exploded. But you may depend upon it that anything I can do for him shall be done, if he needs it. I think I owe him that much;" and Tyrone smiled.

"Bedad you do," chuckled Macan, "for you tumbled him like ten-pins. I can't help laughing when I think of it. Well, I suppose we must part; but we only part like the blades of the scissors, to meet again, I hope."

"I hope not," Tyrone said, gravely, "for your sake, Macan. Think of my advice; go back to America and serve her; you can't serve Ireland in your way——"

"When I forget thee, oh Jerusalem—" the General began, and then he stopped with a grim smile. "Where are you bound for, Phil?"

"I'll go to Paris with you for a few days; then I'll come back to London; I am safe there. Like Mr. Tyrone, I am no Fenian; I speak Fenian daggers, but I use none."

Tyrone looked round with an angry gleam in his eyes. But Quentin seemed calmly unconscious of having said anything which could possibly give offence.

"You're not the rose, though you live near it—under it, for that matter," said Macan. "Well, never mind; some must watch while others sleep, as Shakspeare says."

"I have a carriage on the road above," said Colonel Quentin, pointing in that direction. "It will take us to the town, into the railway station, and then we can all go our ways."

So they mounted the cliff in silence. Quentin smoked; Macan hummed an air between his teeth. Tyrone felt greatly relieved for two reasons. He was free of the absurdity of the duel; he felt a strong hope that a premature explosion had shattered harmlessly the Fenian plot. In some way that he would have found it hard to explain in words he seemed to have got a new charter and lease of life. Little as the thought of death had pressed upon him, it yet was evident to his mind that in coming to meet Charette he might have been coming to his death. Now that the danger was over it presented

itself more emphatically to his mind. Suppose he had been killed by the bullet of that crack-brained Frenchman (Tyrone, a capital shot, had resolved that he would not, under any provocation, aim at his antagonist), what a death and what a life! A life of senseless, tasteless extravagance and folly, of shameful debt and difficulty, of playing at patriotism and politics; and a death springing out of a quarrel with a half-crazy adventurer. Something in the circumstances—the scene, the hour, the sweet morning air, the sunrise, the breath of the sea, the dear old memories of childhood and youth which the touch of French soil sent rushing to his heart—something in all this filled the young man with regret for the past and resolve for the future. Mounting the cliff silently he cast one bold, reliant glance over the sea, and he determined to take up his broken life and honestly mend it. And, mingling with the resolve, came somehow the thought of Jennie Aspar, now an orphan.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Colonel Quentin did not think of remaining in Paris. Unlike most Americans, he cared little for the Boulevards and the Champs Elysées. He had come to London on business of various kinds, and Paris only interrupted his pursuits. In Paris, too, he found it hard to get along, except through the influence of the American Minister and other Americans of distinction; and, to say the truth, these somehow did not seem to care much for Colonel Quentin. On the other hand, in London he could do without his countrymen. He could make the acquaintance of English people for himself, and it was with English people he especially wished to have to do.

Philip Quentin, as he had called himself from boyhood, was a man of some talent and of great ambition, but, unluckily for his ambition, of a keenly sensitive and egotistic nature. He had gone through life conscious of a sort of pariah mark upon him, for Quentin's father and mother were of the class who used to be branded throughout the Southern States of America as the mean whites. Quentin's mother was the sister of old Tyrone's wife, the old Tyrone whose son now lay dead in the miserable house on the southern side of London. Both sisters were pretty and poor and "fast." Old Tyrone of New York married one and was not happy with her;

always suspected her, and never without good reason for suspicion. The other sister, much younger, was taken down South by a rich Tennessean who came up to New York one winter and made her acquaintance one day on a Brooklyn ferry-boat. The young Southerner, however, dropped her very soon somewhere, and she subsequently married a poor saddler in Virginia, and she had a son, and they were of that despised and degraded class, the mean whites—the creatures who had neither the social position and property that seemed essential to freedom in the South, nor the protected comfort of slavery. Philip, the son, was a clever and precocious boy. He soon saw the social degradation of their condition. He overheard some domestic disputes in which the character of his mother was rather frankly discussed, and in which her husband's explicit accusation met with a doubtful denial, and finally a contemptuous and cynical admission on her part. Philip soon made up his mind that any place would suit him better than home. He ran away—indeed, there was little effort likely to be made to stay his departure—and after much weary wandering and privation he found himself in New York. He did not go near his Irish uncle Tyrone, not thinking it likely that he would find much of a welcome from him. He got a situation as messenger in a store; he lived on next to nothing, but took care to get himself educated. He attracted the attention of a man of some influence and benevolence, who obtained for him finally a nomination to West Point, the great military academy of the United States. Once in there, Philip's way was clear enough. The pay and rations allowed to a cadet were ample for his support. At length he found himself an officer of the United States Army, and on duty in one of the forts in the Southern city where Selina Saulsbury was then a young belle and poetess.

Philip, the moment he entered New York, resolved to change his name. He acted on Coleridge's plan, glanced up at the nearest shop, saw the name Quentin, and became thenceforth Philip Quentin. We need not follow him through his love, his disappointment, his adventures in the war, his capture and imprisonment. The war over, Quentin went in for mining speculations in the West, and showed rather a genius in that way. Although he somehow did not get much mixed up with companies and speculations of the better class, he got his pockets well filled with money that seemed to go as fast as it came. He was arranging for a trip to

Europe on the business of one of the mining speculations with which he was concerned, when he heard in New York of old Tyrone's death and his strange will. The old man, having learned that his nephew had repudiated his family and run away, was taken with a sort of admiration for him, and appointed him (if he should still be living and could prove his identity) the heir of the money in the event of the head of the house of Tyrone not complying with the conditions. Quentin thus saw himself placed within the possibility of a future surpassing the dreams of his wildest ambition. He looked carefully into the matter and still suppressed his identity. So long as he remained unknown he thought there was some chance of his being able to advance his own interests. From a distance he studied the ground and the character of Tyrone. Macan gave him, unconsciously, plenty of help. The Fenian organization seemed a providential chance to Quentin. The two war comrades came to Europe each with his own design on the career of Tyrone. Quentin had hardly reached London when he found the new chance given to his schemes in the person of his old love, Selina Lorn.

Colonel Quentin had ambition and talent enough to secure success, but his sensitiveness and his egotism were his fatal enemies. It was a torture to him always to think that people were mentally scrutinizing his claims to be considered a gentleman; and his occasional swaggering self-assertion was only a forcibly disguised confession of weakness. He had never forgiven Selina Lorn for having made a fool of him and thrown him over, and there was something feminine, in the worst sense, in the revengeful pleasure which he felt while humbling and torturing her. He was not naturally bad; he might, under happier circumstances of early life, have been generous and even high-principled. But the base condition of his early bringing-up clung to him. He had some of the worst meannesses of servitude added to the vanity and conceit of the so-called self-made man. Contact with such a woman as Selina Lorn was a great misfortune to him, for so much really furious passion thrown away in his youth, turned sour and corrupt within him. Even the war did not ennoble his character, for he went with his flag as much out of hatred for the South, where he had been so degraded, as gratitude and patriotic devotion to the North, which had been his friend.

Colonel Quentin kept his eyes pretty closely on anything

that seemed to concern him, however remotely, and he had learned before he left for France all about the death of Jennie's father, and the condition in which the event had left the two girls. He immediately paid Mrs. Lorn a visit.

"This is a chance for you, Selina," he said, after some preliminary words. "This girl Jennie, I suppose, is the hated rival?"

Mrs. Lorn blushed deeply. "How can you speak to a woman in that way? The poor little girl! That child in rivalry with me!"

"Do try to tell the truth, Selina, in speaking with me at least, or teach your cheeks the art of conspiring with your tongue. You are afraid of this girl—you think your young hero likely to make her a young heroine. Is not that so?"

"If you choose to humiliate me, Colonel Quentin, by such a suggestion, I cannot help myself—I can't even resent it."

"Why should you resent it? I don't want to offend you, I mean to help you; only I don't care to throw my words away for nothing, and I want to be quite sure that we understand each other. Well, I think we do. Now this girl, you know, is reduced to utter poverty. Here is a splendid chance for you. You can play the magnanimous with a vengeance. Go to this girl, and offer to take her under your care, for the present at least. Don't listen to any refusal—carry her off. Bring her here."

"Here—bring her here? I don't understand you."

"No? And they talk of the tact of women!" Quentin said, raising his eyebrows. "Can't you see that, in the first place, you will show splendidly in the eyes of her and of him; that, in the next place, you will show him how little afraid you are of her—which will of itself reduce her value immensely in his eyes; and in the third and last place, you will have her always under your influence, and if you can't in six weeks—what with open counsel and half-hidden inuendos, and all a woman's tricks of covert allusion and stab, and pretended pity and so forth—utterly spoil her chances and change her purposes, and render her absolutely miserable, if you wish to do that, you are not the woman I take you for. You are a very different creature from the Selina who used to flirt with me long ago, and who beguiled old Lorn in the end. Just take my advice, Selina."

"I will—I suppose I must."

"And look here, there are such things to be done, if people only had the brains! Of course this girl must have had some piano or guitar, or favourite instrument of some kind. All girls have. Find out all about that, as you can easily do—piano, books, relics of mamma—that sort of thing, you know—and have the articles bought up, and placed in your house ready for her when she comes. That kind of thing tells immensely."

"There are two girls, Philip."

"Yes, but you can't take the two. Mind, not on any account! You must have your little rival absolutely under your own control and influence. That ridiculous woman, the Aunt Lucy, ought to take the other girl. I suppose she will. Anyhow, *you* can't! You understand your part, Mrs. Lorn?"

"I do," said Mrs. Lorn, with a sigh. "But I wish, Philip, you had not the art of making even a good action seem mean and selfish."

"Yes, the pleasanter thing in life is to make mean and selfish actions seem good. But that is an art I don't care to cultivate with you, Selina."

"I am almost ashamed of trying to serve this girl."

"Be not ashamed, my dear; there will be little service when all's done, you'll find."

Colonel Quentin presently took his departure, leaving Selina to rage within herself impotently. He never came without degrading her in her own estimation. His purpose and business seemed to be her degradation. He stripped away with a pitiless hand from her little cowering and shuddering soul all the tinsels and purple rags of sentiment and romance and mock heroism in which she loved to drape it, and he compelled her to regard it in all its naked meanness and egotism. "I wish somebody would kill him! I wish I had the courage to kill him!" she muttered to herself. "I am a coward—a Southern woman, and yet a coward!"

She had tried once or twice what could be done by the old fascinations. Oh, if she could only bring Philip Quentin back into love with her once more, and see him her slave! But Quentin laughed in her face, and told her with pleasing frankness that he saw through all her little tricks, and made mirth of her until the tears came into her eyes. She gave up that plan in despair, and submitted to her fate in bitterness, hoping that heaven, or some other power, would rid her of her persecutor before he had time to drive her out of her senses.

"I say, mamma!" said Theodore, bursting in upon her, "isn't this an awful go? Look here, you know! something's got to be done. Poor Jennie Aspar—that stunning girl—finest girl in all England—lost her father, and hasn't got a red cent, I hear."

"So I have heard, darling. Very sad: a heavy dispensation of Providence——"

"Yes, I know. But something must be done; you know, *we* can't stand that sort of thing."

"What sort of thing, Theodore?"

"Girls like that left without a home, you know; you must bring them here. One of them shall have my room. I'll go upstairs. *I* don't care—men sleep anywhere, you know."

"Darling boy! I had thought of this already."

"Bully for you, mamma! Of course you did. Well, let's lose no time. I'll go if you like."

"Well, Theodore, I think perhaps it would be better if I were to go alone."

"Think so? Then I'll order the brougham, right away." And he vanished.

Mrs. Lorn felt somewhat comforted by the thought that the charitable part thus became, in a measure, her own work again, having been suggested by the son of her bosom. She enjoyed at all times playing a generous and heroine-like part, and this would interest, amuse, and excite her. She was enabled therefore to drape her nature again with the tinsels and purple rags which Quentin had torn away. Moreover, she could not conceal from herself, even in her mood of restored heroism and self-admiration, the fact that there was a good deal of sense in Quentin's suggestion about the advantage of having one's rival under one's own eyes and influence.

It never occurred to Selina Lorn to speculate as to the motive of Colonel Quentin in counselling this act. For one reason, Selina Lorn never studied with interest any emotions but her own. She was always her own heroine; and when she had got a hero her life romance was complete. But even if she had suspected Quentin's motive, she would have had to follow his orders all the same. He had now obtained a power over her which was out of proportion even with his worst means of injuring her. By steadfastly exhibiting himself to her as her master, by deliberately and continually humbling her in her own eyes, and accustoming her to see

that he had a set purpose in thus humbling her; by interpreting for her in plain words all the little crafts and hopes and deceits of her nature, this unpitying former lover had utterly demoralized her; reduced her to such a condition almost as that to which some unscrupulous mesmerist can bring a weak-nerved patient. But Quentin had a special and personal purpose in ordering Mrs. Lorn to play the part of a generous friend to Jennie—a purpose which could Selina only have divined it, might have gladdened her heart to know.

## CHAPTER XX.

Tyrone had to assist at two funerals on his return to England with his new lease of life. Mr. Aspar was buried in the beautiful Norwood cemetery, near the soft Surrey hills; the other Maurice Tyrone was laid in earth in the Roman Catholic burial-ground at Kensal Green. The widow desired that he should be buried there, because, though for years he had held aloof from all recognition of dogmatic creed, his early life had been nurtured in and even for the Roman Catholic Church, and she who felt that she had in some sort beguiled him from his faith and his inheritance with his faith, regarded it as a sort of expiation that he should be restored in death to the early shelter. Tyrone could learn enough from her few allusions to their past life to know that the old Tyrone had intended his son for the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church, that he had sent him for this purpose to a Jesuit college in England, that the young man had made the acquaintance of a young woman of good family, that the two had fallen in love, that the student had renounced his vows, and that they were married. The marriage meant their repudiation by both families; meant a short prime of passionate happiness, snatched proudly from the world and fate, and then years of hard struggle, always brightened by love; and then deepening poverty, growing eccentricity, an invading ill-health, a wretched living made by teaching languages to the very few who would pay for such instruction; finally a breakdown and death! This much Tyrone half learned, half guessed. More, for the present, he did not attempt to discover.

Immediately after this dismal duty Tyrone sought for news

of Jennie Aspar, but as yet did not try to see her. It gave him a certain sense of annoyance or regret—he could hardly tell why—when he learned that she was already under the roof of Mrs. Lorn.

Days passed away, and Jennie was growing better reconciled to the calamity that had fallen upon her. Somehow it had been brooding over her so long that it did not come with much of a surprise. She had known by the look in her father's face that something was going to happen. The death sentence written there bore its terrible import vaguely in its lines and letters, even though the wondering, watchful eye could not trace out its precise meaning and date of doom.

Overpowered by the kindness of Mrs. Lorn, Jennie had gladly accepted a refuge in her house for the present. Alicia was sheltered by Mrs. Granger; but Mrs. Granger could not keep the two girls, and made no secret of the fact. Jennie did not intend to remain long an idle visitor anywhere. She took great blame to herself for not having tried to understand all her father's affairs. She felt herself almost as if she were responsible in part for his failure and his death. No feeling of that sort agonized the gentle and uninquiring Alicia, who never thought of any calamity but as some mysterious stroke of Providence; and never exerted herself to consider whether anything could by possibility have been other than simply what it was. Alicia never blamed herself or anybody else. She took her own household ways—her father, her aunt, death, and all the other accidents—precisely as they came. She assumed that her father was a model father, and her aunt a model aunt. All the people she knew were good people. Nobody could have helped what had happened. In their quiet life at home it had often been a wonder to Alicia to see poor little impatient Jennie tugging at her chain, and snapping at the bars of her cage, and objecting to this and that, and going nigh sometimes to arraign the whole scheme of the universe. But she assumed that younger sisters usually were so, and had to be petted and humoured a good deal. So she petted and humoured Jennie, who sometimes grew all the more impatient and contradictory for the very petting.

Jennie did not say a word to her sister about her own self-reproach. It would be useless she felt; but she was not sorry to be left to herself, and without Alicia for a while.

She had a great deal to say to herself, and to her own heart; a great deal to condemn herself for, and feel remorse for and atone for; and she would have taken little comfort from the companionship of some quieter and less sensitive nature which would have idly tried to soothe her with assurances that everybody had done the best he and she could, and that no one was to blame. Jennie resolved that she would go in for an active useful life somehow, and that come what might, she would not swing idly to and fro on the gilt ring of the parrot-cage-life which some women can so complacently accept as their highest mission. What to do she did not yet know; but do something she would; live idly and for nothing she would not.

Meantime she looked beautiful, calm, and full of soul, in her sad black dress. She was not unhappy, considering all that had befallen her. Mrs. Lorn was acting her part of tender friend and guardian charmingly; and indeed thus far quite enjoyed the part, and gave her soul to it. Theodore was the dearest, most devoted little creature in the world. Her harp, the relic of such happy and dreamy days—days when the saddest dreams were yet steeped in sunlight—had been bought for her by Mrs. Lorn. Carpenter had brought her the poor little toy her father had secretly put in his pocket that memorable night of awful warning, and which she now knew he had secreted for her. It stood upon the chimneypiece of her bedroom, and was like a sacred relic. Theodore had gone himself and brought away a branch of her own old tree and set it in a flower-pot, where it refused to grow, and soon became as black as an old tobacco stalk. Tyrone went to the cottage, and when the sale came on bought (which he could but little afford to do) all the books that bore her name or her sister's, and sent them to her without any word to indicate whence they came. There was a beautiful little bookcase—a perfect little gem of a thing—in which most of these books used to be. Tyrone endeavoured to buy this too, but some persistent and irrepressible broker competed for it until Tyrone found that he at last must positively give up the struggle for lack of means to carry it on; which he did—the bitterest sacrifice he had ever yet made in life. He thought of the money he had squandered without joy to himself or good to others, and he elbowed his way out of the crowd and came moodily back to London. He had set his heart on buying that little thing for Jennie, and he had to give it up because of the price.

The broker, his rival, held on against all competitors and won the prize. Next day the bookcase was sent to Mrs. Lorn's for Miss Jennie Aspar, and with Colonel Quentin's respectful compliments and sympathies.

"You are all so kind to me, you all spoil me," said Jennie to Mrs. Lorn one morning as they sat together. "Even Colonel Quentin, whom I hardly know, see how he sends me that little bookcase."

"Philip Quentin used to have a kind and generous heart always," Mrs. Lorn said with a sigh; "but, dear child, who would not feel sympathy with a sweet girl suddenly orphaned?"

"Still, Colonel Quentin—whom I never thought of—it touches me ever so much; you, Mrs. Lorn, are so full of kindness and sympathy, that one looks without wonder at any generous act you may do; and of course I knew something of Mr. Tyrone before."

"Mr. Tyrone, dear?"

"Yes, Mrs. Lorn; of course I knew quite well it was he who sent me the books."

"How do you know, child?"

"Well, for one thing, because there was no name with them, and—oh yes, of course it was he—and I don't suppose he has much money to spend."

If Jennie had only known that all the money she and her sister had in the world to begin the world with was the poor last remnant of Tyrone's fortune!

Mrs. Lorn felt herself growing angry and uneasy while Jennie spoke, but she kept herself well in hand.

"Ah! poor Mr. Tyrone! Nowhere in the world is there a kindlier heart than his! He is always doing things of that kind—always. He is the very creature of generous impulse. He never counts the cost or thinks of his own means. Let him only hear a word of any story of distress anywhere, and he will insist on offering his help in some way. You are quite right, it was Mr. Tyrone of course. But he might have told me, for I have spoken to him so often about you, Jennie."

Jennie felt humbled somehow, although she could hardly tell why.

"You know Mr. Tyrone a long time?" she said, faintly.

"Oh yes, a long time. I have a warm friendship and affection for Mr. Tyrone. His follies and faults are all on

the surface, and they have been ever so much exaggerated. He is very handsome, and has been always so much flattered and courted by women, and yet he is very little spoiled, I think. *I* have lived in the world a good deal longer than you, my dear Jennie, and I have been married, and I know what men are and must be, and I don't expect too much from a young man like Mr. Tyrone. His condition is very peculiar and romantic, I think, but rather dangerous for indiscreet women who have not their senses about them. You know of course that he can't marry?"

"I think I heard something—that he is too poor."

"Not that only; but there's a splendid property waiting for him, which will be all forfeited if he marries before he is forty. Only think, forty, and he is not eight-and-twenty yet. Of course he might marry a woman with a fortune, but he is too proud for that."

"Yes, I am sure he is," said Jennie, with kindling enthusiasm.

Mrs. Lorn sighed audibly though gently, and rested her chin thoughtfully for a moment on her small white and jewelled hand.

"Yes, he is too proud to accept fortune at the hand of any woman," she said, "even of a woman whom perhaps he could regard—— Oh, well, it is his generous weakness rather to live alone and struggle through as best he may, wasting and wearing out his life's brightest years and his talents and chances rather than be enriched by the fortune of a woman. Who can help admiring him for it? Even I—well, thank Heaven there are men of spirit still left in this wretched crawling world! Yes, they know little of Mr. Tyrone who talk of him as a fortune-hunter. Unwise he may have been, and sometimes worse perhaps. Who expects perfection of any man, not to speak of a man so peculiarly situated? But he never could be mean."

"Never!" echoed Jennie, strangely chilled and depressed all the time, even while echoing Tyrone's praises.

"With a wife of fortune and ambition and spirit to help him on, what might not such a man become? You knew nothing of all this, my dear."

"Nothing; at least hardly anything, Mrs. Lorn."

"Your father knew it all, but I suppose he thought you too young to care for such things. Mr. Tyrone entrusted him with everything, he had the greatest faith in his honesty."

Jennie looked up quickly, with crimsoning cheeks, but said nothing.

"Mr. Tyrone went to your father of course only in the way of business. He had no need to have gone anywhere to borrow money only for that keen sensitive pride, and I made him promise that he would at least not entrust his affairs to one of the ordinary money-lenders. But you look tired and sad, poor child, and all this could hardly interest you. Forgive me, your sympathetic face beguiled me on. I am not used to confidence and sympathy from women, and your companionship is a strange delight to me, and mine is a strange fate, Jennie, and I suffer much."

Mrs. Lorn took Jennie's hand and pressed it. Jennie only faintly returned the pressure. There was something in this egotism that seemed to freeze her, although as yet her gratitude and affection would not allow her to question the beauty of her benefactress's nature. But she felt profoundly humiliated. Mrs. Lorn had contrived to wound every one of her feelings, and to make her secret thoughts a reproach to her. She was then only the object of Tyrone's pity and compassion, as the orphaned daughter of his money-lender, as any poor orphan girl might be! And Mrs. Lorn had often spoken about her to him, perhaps suggested the very acts of kindness for which she had felt such throbbing gratitude.

Mrs. Lorn and Theodore were going for a drive. Jennie pleaded that she was not very well, and must remain at home. Theodore was disappointed, and said to Jennie when hi mamma had left the room—

"But I say, Jennie, I don't care to go if you don't go."

"Oh yes, Theodore, you must go. I'll go some other day, to-morrow perhaps."

"Why not now, 'twill do you no end of good?"

"No, dear, indeed I could not go to-day."

"I don't understand girls," said the youthful philosopher, blankly.

"Nor I, dear," said Jennie, with a faint smile.

"Then I wont go."

"Yes, indeed you will."

"Nary bit, unless you ask me."

"Ask you?—not I! But I command you to go, you dreadful little rebel! Do you dare to disobey your sister and commander?"

"Oh no! I'm awfully submissive," said Theodore, brighten-

ing, as poor Jennie tried to brighten, and making fearful pantomimic show of abasement and terror. Then as he was going, the boy observed her sad face, and came up and took her hand quite tenderly, and said, "I'll do anything you ask me to do, Jennie, and mamma will too. I can do anything with mamma, you know, but even if I couldn't she's awfully fond of you, and so am I, Jennie!"

Jennie put her arms round his neck and kissed him, and the child's pale face blushed crimson.

Then Jennie ran to her own room and leaned against the window, and looked out wearily upon the trees in the park. She imagined that through the clear soft air she could see the gentle outlines of the Surrey hills, beyond which her old home used to lie, and she thought sadly, but without a tear, of the great wild wave that had suddenly arisen and washed all away from her life, her home, her childhood, her freedom, and her peace of mind. She longed to be away—far away, anywhere, with mountains and seas between her and London, with a new fresh life to begin.

A tap at her door, and a servant brought a card and message for her. From Mr. Tyrone, who particularly wished to see her.

At first she almost thought of refusing, although her heart stood still with emotion at the sight of his name. She thought his kindly, pitying visit would be unendurable. But she speedily rallied. What right had she to show petulance and ill-humour to one who had been so friendly?

"I shall be down in a few minutes," she said; and then she looked in the glass and adjusted her hair, and looked again, and took a final glance, and at last ran down the stairs with a beating heart, wondering what he would say and what she ought to say.

She entered the room. Tyrone was leaning on the chimney-piece, with his back to the looking-glass. He had not a gleam of that vanity which makes a man look into a mirror when no one sees him, or when he thinks no one does. He was looking down, and seemed very thoughtful and grave, which to Jennie's eyes made him seem very handsome. He had a small bouquet in one hand. When she came in he looked up, and the peculiar boyish frankness and sweetness in the expression of his blue-grey Celtic eyes went to her heart like a beam of sympathetic sunlight which warmed her.

"I have not seen you for a long time," he said, taking her

hand in his, "and I came now because I hoped to find you alone. Here are two or three flowers. I brought them for you from—from Surrey. I happened to be in the neighbourhood, and I thought you would like them."

They were from her old garden. She took them. She could not speak a word; her eyes were full of tears.

Tyrone silently placed a chair for her and seated himself at a little distance. He offered no words of idle and barren condolence, and he made no affectation of not seeing her emotion. Indeed, it would have been folly itself to try any such poor pretence, for Jennie broke down and put her handkerchief to her face and sobbed.

Emotional natures understand each other. Tyrone made no effort to check her grief. He gently touched her hand in natural assurance of sympathy, and waited. Her courage soon returned.

"I am ashamed of giving way," she said at last, withdrawing her handkerchief and trying to look cheerful, "and I am really and truly glad to see you, Mr. Tyrone. How kind of you to come."

"I would have come long before only I didn't care to disturb you. And I have some work in hand, Jennie."

She looked up a little surprised, partly at the tone in which he spoke, and partly because for the first time he had called her by her name.

"For," he said, answering her look of inquiry with a grave smile, "I have in hand the reform of a life, the redemption, if I can, of a ruined, or nearly ruined, career. I am not going to be an idler in life any more."

"Nor I," said Jennie, with eager simplicity; "nor I, Mr. Tyrone."

He smiled. "I knew that, and that was partly why I came here now. I don't want to talk of myself, but of *you*. What are you going to do?"

He spoke with a plain, direct earnestness, which had something almost like authority in it.

"I don't know yet," said Jennie, sadly; "I have seen so little of the world—so little of anything. But I will find some way in life. I will think it all over. I do think of it every day and every night. God will open a way for me. Can *you* tell me anything—can you advise me, Mr. Tyrone?"

"I advise!" and he raised his eyebrows; "think of any-

body asking *me* for advice! Well, Jennie, I can advise you to one course. Don't stay too long here."

"Not stay long here? Oh, I don't mean to be a burden on Mrs. Lorn's kindness any longer than——"

"No, it isn't that, Jennie. Mrs. Lorn is full of generous impulses; and what does it cost her to be kind to you? Come, I must talk to you freely. Mrs. Lorn is clever and brilliant, and has fine qualities, but I don't care to see you in this atmosphere. It is too worldly and trivial, and smelling of perfumes and all that. Don't stay in it. Are you angry with me?"

"Oh no. I know that your interest in me is sincere and friendly."

"It is not friendly, Jennie. Why do I speak to you in this way? Why do I put away all ceremony—do you know? Tell me why I was drawn towards you from the first moment? Tell me why I first felt ashamed of my life when I came near you? Tell me why I first thought of purity and all the best part of womanhood and sympathy and happiness and high purpose—all, all—I don't know what else—that I had never thought of before—tell me why I only thought of such things when I knew you?"

He spoke so impetuously that Jennie was almost alarmed, and he gave her no time to answer.

"I'll tell you why," he said; and he had risen now and was standing behind her chair, leaning over it so that she could hear his words but could hardly see him even if she had looked up; "I'll tell you why. Because I love you, Jennie; because you are the only woman I ever loved or cared one straw about, and you are all the world and earth and heaven to me."

"Oh, Mr. Tyrone!" She sprang up and turned round, and looked at him wonder-stricken, almost terror-stricken, and trembling.

He put one hand gently upon her shoulder, rather holding her from him than drawing her to him, and went on—

"I have thought of this, Jennie, this long time. I saw it, and tried to prevent it—partly for your sake—for what good can this do to you?—and partly too, I confess, out of those mean and cowardly motives that make up so much of the noble nature of man! I tell you more, Jennie—let me have the whole confession out—that I would not have loved you if I could have conquered myself. But I could not—and you

know all now—I love you, Jennie! Will you not speak to me?"

She tried to speak, but could not at first. She made a gesture with her hands, pointing to her mourning dress.

"Yes, the time is not fitting for a formal declaration," he said, vehemently, "but what do you and I care for what is fitting? And since you are alone and have lost a father, have you not all the more need of love? Come, speak to me."

"What can I say, Mr. Tyrone? This has quite overwhelmed me. I never thought—I did not dream—and you know it is useless and hopeless."

"But you must speak to me, Jennie, for all that. If despair and ruin themselves stood in the way, I must know how you feel to me. See, I do not approach you—I don't touch your hand!"

"Because you are too brave and generous, and you know this cannot be. Think—if you had a sister."

"If I had, Jennie, I could not wish her truer and more loyal love than mine to you."

"I do believe that; I do, indeed, since you say it—but I wish you had not said it—I think I do. This is happiness and misery all in one."

"Then you *do?*" He gently took her hand in his.

"Oh, you know it," she broke out passionately at last—"you must know it. I do love you, Mr. Tyrone—there! I have loved you always. I would die for your love! No—oh, pray, don't come nearer now that you know all. What good is it that we have said this to each other?"

"What good—if you love me! What good? In the world's meaning no good to you, for I am as poor as Job, but that isn't your meaning, Jennie?"

"Oh no, Mr. Tyrone, far from it."

"Then what *is* your meaning? What good, Jennie? This good. That since you do love me, you will be my wife."

"And my father dead a few days."

"I don't mean to-morrow or the day after, Jennie," and he waved his hand impatiently. "I mean that since you tell me you do care for me, you are pledged and consecrated to be my wife." And throwing his arms round her for the first time, he drew her towards him and raised her face to his, and kissed her lips. She turned a crimson colour, she felt the hot blood suffusing her, she trembled all over with shame

and delight, with strange inexplicable terror and happiness. All her resolve had gone in the emotion of that kiss. Come what might now, hereafter, ever, she knew that they two stood alone.

She drew herself gently from him, however, and sat upon a sofa a little way off and covered her face with her hands. Why was this warm-souled, generous girl thus terror-stricken in all her bubbling delight of heart and sense at the first kiss of her lover? Because there seemed something strange, wild, almost impossible in the thought of their union. Because their conditions were so utterly unlike. Because she could not yet understand why this brilliant, reckless, and ruined waif of a legendary greatness should love *her*. It seemed like some strange old story, when a wild demigod seized on some lowly girl and chose to love her, and while she loved she was afraid for her life and her soul. All the warnings Jennie had received crowded on her. She remembered the agony in which her father had warned her against this very man, whose kiss was now on her lips. Even the seemingly careless words of Mrs. Lorn and others came on her. But most she thought of her father's face. She kept her hands to her eyes, as if she dreaded lest on withdrawing them the dead should appear, risen out of the grave to reproach her.

Did she distrust Tyrone? No! What woman ever loved and distrusted? She loved him with the uttermost passion of her nature. But the very force of this love affrighted her, for she felt that she must stand back from heaven itself if he bade her.

Meanwhile Tyrone saw her emotion, and saw that fear had some share in it. He approached her, sat beside her, and gently withdrew one of her hands from her face. She looked up and drew some courage from the earnest truthfulness of his eyes.

"You are not afraid of me, Jennie—you don't distrust me?" he said, in his gentle and musical voice.

"Oh no—oh no. But I am afraid of all this. It has come so suddenly, and I am so ignorant and alone, and perhaps—perhaps we never were meant for each other."

Tyrone smiled.

"What drew us to each other then? From the first moment I saw you I was drawn towards you. I dare not speak for you."

"Oh, don't think of me," she said, with some of her cha-

racteristic vehemence again reviving and asserting itself. "I went mad at first. I loved you the moment I saw you, and I could never have loved anybody else. I know I couldn't, if I had never seen you again. But *you*—how could you care for me—always? We are so different, Mr. Tyrone. I come from quiet and humble people—I was never even in the shadow of your world. I should only spoil your career; you have something to live for."

"Nothing without you."

"Oh yes; you have a political career, and all that, which women haven't. Do you wonder that I talk in this way? Because I have thought about it night and day since first we met. I have grown from a child into a woman thinking about it. Not that I ever dreamed of your caring for me; but that I tried to reconcile myself to the decree of Heaven, which had kept us so far asunder."

"Jennie, this is folly! Heaven has brought us together."

"How do we know? How do I know? Perhaps you only think you see in me some ideal which you have dreamed of and sought and not found in life. Then you would be disappointed, and we should be wretched."

"If you really loved me, Jennie, as you say, you would not doubt me."

"Hush, pray. Don't speak of my not loving you as I say. Yet I don't love you as I say, for I love you better than any words could ever say. But I don't think I am fit for you. I have not brains, or knowledge, or understanding, or anything. Your friends would wonder——"

"My friends? I wonder who are they! If I had friends, do you think they would venture—or I care? Jennie, the first and only friend I ever had was the impulse which you sent into my soul. You have saved me, Jennie, and you shall be my saviour still and always."

He drew her towards him more freely now.

"Will you," she said, looking up at him pathetically, "will you give me until to-morrow to think over all this? I have no one to consult with but my own heart and conscience. I could not speak a word to my sister even on this. Will you give me until to-morrow, Mr. Tyrone?"

"Surely," he answered, "I would not be so unfair as to press you in a moment of surprise. Perhaps I might do that too, Jennie, if I were inviting you to share a fortune and a bright home. But yours, I warn you, will be a trial and a

sacrifice. You will have to put faith in the perseverance and success of a fellow who has hitherto failed in everything."

"Oh, don't speak of that! That would be no trial. I have all that faith already. I know you can do anything you try—if you only will."

"I think," he said, with a ring of pride in the tone of his voice which pleased and inspired her, "I think I have brains and spirit enough to make a way for myself if I try, and I know that with you I shall not lag. But the risk is yours, Jennie."

"You have forgotten," she said, speaking with great diffidence, and keeping her eyes fixed on the ground, "that you will have to make a great sacrifice by marrying any woman too soon. Is there not a forfeit?"

"Who has been telling you of that?" he asked, quickly. "No matter; you needn't answer; and don't think of that any more. No, Jennie, if you never were to look at me again I have learned something better from you than to shape my life in any way for the sake of the bribe offered by the will of a wretched and eccentric old man to the ruin of his own only son. His money perish with him for me! You would not like to think of me as grovelling in bonds for years to grasp that plundered inheritance, Jennie, would you?"

"I could not think of your doing anything for the sake of money," she answered simply. "I didn't know anything about the only son, but I know that you would not stoop for any one's money. Still, but for me you might have lived on, and——"

He checked her impatiently.

"Then you will give me until to-morrow?" she asked. "I will think and pray, and tell you all then."

"I will—I will; thank you a million times. I know already——"

"Is this cold?—oh! is this strange and cold of me?" she asked, in new agitation. "Does it seem cowardly and ungrateful, and as if I didn't value your love and trust you? Oh, don't think so! don't, I beg and pray! It is only because I love you so much, and feel so unworthy and afraid, and love you better than myself and all the world—and heaven."

He only took her hand and kissed it, with the air of a devoted gentleman to some noble *chatelaine.*

"Your wish is right and natural, and worthy of you, Jennie," he said, warmly. "I should be ashamed of myself

if I pressed you further now; you who are alone and without counsel. Do you wish for even a longer time? A week—a few days?"

"No; not any longer time, Mr. Tyrone. I shall know all to-morrow. If—if I cannot, then will you ever forgive me?"

"Never, indeed," he said, with a bright smile; "but I'm not afraid. You have made me very happy, Jennie; and more than that, you have made me feel as if I really were capable of some purpose and some decent work in life. Give yourself to me, and I will try to make you happy too."

He did not attempt to kiss her as he went away. The instinctive chivalry of his nature, which years of folly and idleness could not send wholly to sleep, was always awake where a pure woman stood near. It always rose and did homage to her. For Jennie the full and passionate confession of her love only secured the deeper reverence. He had kissed her lips once in the moment when he believed her decision assured. Her plea for delay was in his mind a bar of honour against such an approach again. Until she had made up her mind and freely promised, it would have been a meanness to rob her of a single kiss, and Tyrone, who had done many things foolish, and some things wrong, had never in his life done any one thing mean.

## CHAPTER XXI.

When Maurice Tyrone left Jennie, he walked slowly towards the House of Commons. The session was drawing to a close, and he began to doubt whether he should see much more of Parliamentary life. So resolute was he to shake off inaction and bad habits of all kinds, that even the sacrifice of the political career which he had found so stimulating, appeared almost slight to him. All his impulses seized strong hold of him, and the impulse to redeem himself and earn a right to indulge his love was dominant now. How much the noble passion of love itself is pure selfishness philosophy probably can hardly find out. But it is certain that the longing to have Jennie Aspar for his wife was the emotion which had done more for Tyrone than sermon, example, or warning could do. The absurdity and impossibility of beginning his new career penniless, with a penniless young wife, had not yet quite presented itself to the mind of the impetuous

young chieftain. The simple and practical preliminary question what Jennie was to do with herself, where she was to live until the marriage, which could not in decency take place within a month after her father's funeral, even this little question had not occurred to him. Truly, if it had he would have found it very difficult to answer. To do him justice, he was ready for any sacrifice himself, and would have set out for Australia or the backwoods of America the day after to-morrow with Jennie. But the plain direct question —how are a poor young man brought up to be a prince, and a poor young woman brought up to do nothing, going to make a living all at once, he had not ventured to approach.

As he entered the House a certain sense of disappointment and regret came over him. He had loved the excitement of the place and the delight of playing at Irish chieftain. All this, when once he set himself to earn a living and keep a wife, he must give up. He felt some pride in having, amid all his ruin, a sacrifice to make for Jennie; but it was a sacrifice. There is to some natures an unspeakable charm in that House of Commons life, in its debates and divisions and turmoils; in its exclusiveness to the outer world, and its easy companionship within; in the party strife, always renewing, and the victory always to be fought for and won over again; in the late hours and political dinners and conferences; in the quick, constant sense of vitality and purpose and personal importance which it brings with it. Tyrone had plunged into all this with the keen zest of a boy. He loved to lounge down to the House from his club, and spend an hour or two there listening to the earlier business, or talking in the lobby and the smoking-room; then to go and dine at the house of some political leader; then to look in at two or three crowded drawing-rooms; then to return to the House in time to hear the big men speak, and to take part in the division; then to go off to some club again and finish the night, and at last walk home by the early sunlight to his lodgings, and even then to sit up yet and read part of a novel before going to bed. He had a magnificent constitution, and all this was easy to him. His nature and temperament called for excitement and motion; he was only happy when he had twenty things to do, or places to go to all at once. Happily for him he had with all his love for excitement no care for wine. He was always temperate in drinking: not hitherto from any principle, but because he did not

take any pleasure in any save the most moderate drinking. He liked society, and to talk to clever and pretty women, and to be thought handsome by them, and to see them lay themselves out for flirtation with him. He liked to try all manner of sensation, and had committed many follies in order to experience the sensation which followed them. He liked to be pointed out as a remarkable man, an object of wonder, and as he has already said himself, he rather liked when the newspapers attacked him. Altogether it must be owned that Tyrone's was not a very lofty nature. But it was very loveable, brave, and true. It kept amid whatever folly a certain boyish freshness around it. His heart was capable of deep and strong emotion, capable even when he least knew it, of passionate love. He was very true in his own impulsive way to his country, and what he believed to be her cause. He was sure to be very true to the woman he loved, and he now knew that he had found her.

Therefore his sense of disappointment with his career never brought up any thought of regret for his renunciation of it to win his wife. But he felt that if he could have pursued it with her, it would have given it and life, and perhaps even her, a new charm. He would have liked to bring her, his wife, down to the Ladies' Gallery, and leave her there while a debate went on, and come up every now and then to exchange a word with her, and when the debate was over take her to some brilliant drawing-room where clever and witty men and women talked of such things. He would have liked to take her to the Opera, and he thought how charming she would look on horseback in the Row. He thought with a glow of personal pride and delight of the sensation her beauty and her bright ways could not but create everywhere. He had seen most of the beautiful women of Belgravia and the Faubourg St. Germain and the Faubourg St. Honoré, and he vowed that there was none like Jennie—none. He would have liked to take her to Ireland, where the peasants in the fields positively worship beauty and youth, and where the name of Tyrone would be like a coronet set on Jennie's brow. All this he would have liked dearly.

Now there was a possible way—a way easily available—by which all this might be secured. Tyrone had many times been gently—ever so delicately and gently—sounded by unofficial persons known to be in the confidence of the Govern-

ment. Vehemently as he had often opposed the ministers, sharply as the ministerial prints had criticised him, yet he had given good help to the Government by his discouragement of Fenianism and other wild movements on the part of his countrymen. It was conveyed to him that the Government would not be unwilling to mark their sense of his services; it was not conveyed to him, but it was the fact all the same, that the Government would be glad to buy him off, and get him out of the way for the future, because he was as likely any day to prove an enemy as a friend, and he was a ready and brilliant debater. Of course no Government official hinted anything to him. Things are not done in that broad and clumsy way, entangling both parties in an equally uncomfortable responsibility. No; a private friend of the Prime Minister, who usually sat on the back benches, and hardly ever took part in the debate, being understood to have no political views of any distinctness, took the arm of Tyrone one evening, and walked up Whitehall and along Pall Mall and St. James's Street, and talked of things in general, and in the course of the talk put a seemingly careless question or two. Tyrone quite understood all this, and knew that he had only to give a satisfactory answer, and something would soon be offered to him. There are plenty of Commissionerships of this, that, and the other which don't take men out of London to whom London is a condition of existence. Now with twelve or fifteen hundred a year fixed and certain, a man of assured position may live pleasantly in London, and find society open its drawing-rooms to himself and his wife, although they are known to be poor when compared with their neighbours. Between a secure fifteen hundred a year and a more or less damaged and precarious three hundred a year, the difference is considerable.

Tyrone, however, did not return any answer. He was quite determined that come what might he would not forfeit his independence.

Rumours of a disagreeable kind began, however, to find their way into some of the papers. There was a Liberal evening journal which always girded at Liberal ministers and measures, and this very evening it came out with a pungent and agreeable little paragraph intimating that the Government were supposed to intend to offer a Colonial Governorship to Mr. Tyrone, M.P., "a gentleman who is said to be in the full

confidence of the Fenians, and in constant communication even now with their leaders." The moment Tyrone entered the lobby of the House, his friend Captain Cadsby asked him if he had seen the paper, and put it into his hand. Tyrone looked annoyed.

That night he had a notice on the paper which contains the programme of the evening's business, "to call attention to the arrest and imprisonment of General Charette, a Frenchman by birth, and a naturalized citizen of the United States of America; to ask whether the opinion of the Law officers of the Crown had been taken as to that arrest and detention, and to move for all papers and correspondence bearing on the subject." Tyrone was anxious to do something for Charette, and was seriously of opinion that the wisest thing the Government could do would be to let the cosmopolitan conspirator go his way. The Fenian panic was full on just then; the arrest of this man had excited some attention, and given to the supposed conspiracy a stamp of terrible reality. For General Charette was no raw Irish peasant with a rusty gun playing at rebellion. He had commanded many a barricade, screamed with his shrill voice over many a battle-field. Charette meant fighting and blood anyhow. His name had long been familiar to the English public, and to find him arrested for complicity in a Fenian conspiracy altered the whole character of the thing to an English mind as completely as if a suburban resident seeing his garden invaded by a pack of strange dogs, and going for his cane to drive them out, were to discover that a panther was in their midst.

The House was therefore a good deal interested and even excited when Tyrone rose. The sight of the full benches and eager faces stirred him, and he spoke well. He was not an orator, but he stood well up among the second class men (there are only at most three or four members of the House of Commons who rise distinctly above second class); his voice was admirable, his manner easy and graceful. He generally struck out some brilliant sparkles as he went along; and when he understood a subject could speak capitally on the spur of the moment. He made his plea moderately but effectively. He argued that Charette was not an English subject, and that the only reason for assuming him to have any connexion with Irish rebellion was found in speeches delivered by him in the United States. Finally, Tyrone urged that the Fenian movement had collapsed, and that the wisest policy on the

part of the Government would be that of a magnanimous forbearance.

The Attorney-General was put up to answer, which he did very drily. The arrest was perfectly lawful. Foreign citizens had no more right to concoct rebellions on British soil against the British Sovereign than an English subject could have. He assured the House that the conspiracy was by no means of the trivial and harmless character which the Honourable Member (Tyrone) had ascribed to it. The Government was thoroughly informed as to its extent and character and most of its promoters and patrons. He declared himself much surprised that the Honourable Member should profess such an ignorance of its nature and extent.

This was an evident thrust at Tyrone. The House understood it by the light of the newspaper paragraph already mentioned, and cheered with vehemence.

Up rose a Tory member of the deepest Blue and Orange tinge—a huge, heavy, hippopotamus-like man, with a corrugated face, iron-grey whiskers, and a harsh voice; an honest bigot and sturdy blockhead of Conservatism. This gentleman began a violent assault upon Tyrone, and charged him, in boisterous words, with being an ally and promoter of the Fenian movement. Not many other members of the House would have made so broad a charge on such slender evidence, but the accusation being made, was loudly cheered.

Tyrone kept himself perfectly cool, and when his time for reply came, he simply declared that he had, so far from encouraging Fenianism, always done his best to persuade his countrymen not to risk their lives and disturb the peace of the country in a movement which—here he paused, and let his words come out with deliberation and distinctness—"which was so utterly hopeless."

A loud and angry outburst from many parts of the House followed the words. Most members had expected something quite different—something like a strenuous condemnation of the principles of Fenianism. Many men liked Tyrone were sorry to see him under any kind of cloud, and would have heard with pleasure from his lips a frank declaration against the spirit and objects of all seditious conspiracies. They were disappointed and angry when the peculiar words he used, and the peculiar emphasis he gave to them, seemed to convey the idea that rebellion would have his sympathy if it had a good chance of success. Therefore the House clamoured

against Tyrone, who, having said all he wanted to say, sat down with an appearance of perfect composure.

In truth, however, the young chief was not composed, but was glowing with anger. The words he had used were the offspring of a bitter impulse. He thought the House was disposed to treat him ungenerously, and he therefore chose the form of words which he held most likely to create a storm. For he was, as we know, resolutely set against all manner of rebellious projects on principle, but he was in no humour to admit that now.

A leading member of the Government rose, and in a kind and conciliatory tone expressed his regret that the honourable member should have inadvertently made use of a form of expression which conveyed to the House an idea which he was sure the honourable member never intended to convey. The Minister opposed the motion which bore upon the release of Charette, but implied that although Tyrone's speaking again would not be quite in order, yet he was sure the House would gladly listen to a few words of explanation.

The House cheered again.

Tyrone offered no word of explanation. He merely touched his hat in acknowledgment of the courtesy of the Minister, and remained seated and sullen. The House roared anew, and the division bell was rung. The vote was taken, the motion made by Tyrone was negatived by an overwhelming majority, and Tyrone sauntered out into the lobby, feeling a little like an outlaw—like one, at all events, whose political career is closing for ever.

He avoided, although with seeming carelessness and inadvertence, everybody whom he knew. He saw grave and elderly members, who, he felt perfectly certain, were hurrying up to advise him and remonstrate with him, and he kept his eyes resolutely turned away, and passed on.

There is a common type of member of Parliament who assumes that the object and business of every man in the House is to get a place with a salary, or a seat in the Government, or a Peerage. Members who belong to this pattern discuss every event and everybody's conduct with regard to this grand object. They are of a piece with the women who discuss every unmarried woman's conduct and life solely as her chances of a husband are thereby affected. They are generally pleasant and good fellows, quite honourable in their private dealings, but they have lived too long in Parliament

to retain any sense of the romantic in connexion with it. Indeed, one cannot wonder at that: the men who have any romance left in them in connexion with Parliament, might generally at any given time drive home together in one carriage. But, on the other hand, these few are the men who in the end control the Parliament and the country. Average and Commonplace seem to have it all their own way, but the Romantic and the Eccentric are meanwhile moving the world.

A group of the Average and Commonplace was collected near the side entrance for members in Westminster Hall.

"What a confounded fool Tyrone has made of himself," said Mr. Shavers, M.P. "The Government never can do anything for him now. He must be devilish hard up. Can't imagine what he lives upon."

"Oh, Tyrone's right enough," Mr. Wynter, M.P., replied; "he's going to marry an American woman with lots of money. He's going out of politics altogether. These good-looking Irish fellows always marry women with money."

"Ay, ay—that's it then, is it? I thought he could hardly be such a fool as to throw away his last chance; for the Government would certainly have done something for him, only for to-night's business."

"All play-acting—to night's business," Mr. Wynter sententiously remarked; for he prided himself upon knowing everything and seeing through everybody; "it was done to please the American woman. She was in the ladies' gallery; I saw her. She thinks it fine to talk Fenianism and Republicanism, and all that kind of rot. Tyrone knows what he's about, I tell you."

A great Minister passed out. He was a man with a deeply-lined and wasted pale face, and dark brown eyes that glowed like those of a stag. The Minister was in conversation with another, and they too talked of Tyrone.

"I am sorry he lost his temper," said the man of genius; "for I know he was betrayed into saying or hinting more than he meant. I like him; I think there's a great deal in him. He has spirit and brains, and I have implicit faith in him. I don't know of any one who could serve us better in Ireland, if he only would put a little more faith in us. Such a man as he might stand between Ireland and Fenianism."

"But they say he is in some sort of relationship with the Fenians."

"Oh, no—nonsense. Didn't you hear him to-night? He said he was not."

The great Minister knew when to believe the word of a man, in defiance of appearances and evidences. The faculty is one of the privileges of genius, and cannot be acquired or got up.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Real life then had come upon Jennie. The real world, of which she had so often dreamed as she rocked in the branches of her tree, had found her. It had come to her, as it comes to most of us, in a bewilderment between agony and joy. She could not yet quite realize the truth that she had lost a father and found a lover. The evening after Tyrone left her was one of anxiety such as she had never felt before; of torturing thought and suspense, and elation and doubt. It would be needless to say that she hardly slept that night. There was so much to decide, and no one to help her in the decision! That is a strange moment in the life of a young woman, when she feels that her whole future depends on Yes or No; and she knows at the same time that there is no soul living on whom she could rely for counsel or help. Such a crisis makes or mars a character.

Now the first moment when Jennie made up her mind to act for herself, with a flash of mental review she went over the two or three possibilities of counsel which life had left to her, and she dismissed them as impossible. She knew that if she spoke to her sister, Alicia would urge her to refuse Mr. Tyrone on the mere ground of their dead father's dread of him. She knew too that if she were to consult Mrs. Granger, her good aunt Lucy would earnestly urge the marriage, just because Tyrone was a man of position and in "society."

"I must go my own way—I must walk alone," she thought to herself. "I think I feel like a young king, afraid of my position—but oh so proud of it!" And Jennie smiled amid sparkling tears.

For there was a perfect intoxication of happiness and of pride, submerging all her recent sorrow and humiliation for the hour, in the knowledge that Tyrone loved her. She almost thought it was a sin against the memory of her father to feel so happy, while he lay so newly in his grave. "But I can't help it—I can't help it," the girl cried passionately;

"he *is* my hero, and I so love him, and I never thought he could love me! I wonder why he does love me?"

She never for a moment seemed to think of doubting Tyrone's constancy. All the teaching and warning which she had received upon this head had been thrown away upon her. She had the most perfect faith in him. But what she had to think of was this. Now at the moment he was poor, and she was, as she thought, still poorer—what would be right for her to do with regard to him, and for his sake? Would it be right to ask him to wait—to offer to wait for him—until better times should come? And suppose in the meanwhile one or other should die? Or ought she for his sake to refuse him point-blank, and so set him free, and let things go with her as they would? Ought she to save his career and his prospects from herself? Or should she brave all, and tell him she was devoted to him heart and soul, and would marry him, or die for him, whenever he pleased? "Does he love me as I do him, I wonder?" she thought. "Do men ever love in that way? Is any woman worth sacrificing a career for to them? Am I but an accident or an episode to him, and he all in all to me?" If she could only know this, one way or the other, then she would know how to act. The real world seemed terribly trying. But still her heart was filled with delight and pride, for she had been recalled out of the deepest depths to hear that her hero loved her.

At last she found counsel where she might have found it first—just in the inspiration of her own heart. She wrote a letter to Tyrone, and went out next morning early herself and dropped it in the post. She dropped it into a pillar post-office near the Marble Arch, and before dropping it in she looked at the address again and again, and seemed almost afraid, and then blushed, and seeing somebody coming assumed a resolute bearing, and let the letter fall into the box as if it were just an ordinary fragment of correspondence. Then she hurried away into Hyde Park, and breathed for awhile the morning air there, and could hear her own heart beating, and was sad for very joy and humble for very pride.

This was the letter which came to Tyrone that noon:—

"My dear Mr. Tyrone,—I have thought it all over. I only know that I love you, and have loved you since the first night I saw you, and I am so proud and happy to know that you care for me. After that, what is the use of saying more?

I could never again love any one—any one but you. May we not, then, be true to each other for a little, and let this be known to each other only? You will have faith in me, and I shall never doubt you. Then I shall not feel that I am a clog and a hindrance to you, and shall not blame myself, and shall try to be more worthy of you and of happiness, and you will be the more free to begin that new brave life you spoke of. From my heart I believe this is the best for us, and the only right thing for me to do. Come and tell me soon you think so too, for I would do nothing of which you do not approve. You are my hero, and I love you so devotedly.

"Ever, my dear Mr. Tyrone, yours,

"JENNIE ASPAR.

"Maurice Fitzhugh Tyrone, Esq., M.P."

The letter might have seemed cold to others; it did not seem so to Tyrone. By the light of his sympathetic and generous nature he read its very soul. He saw the deep, self-suppressing love struggling through it—the love that would fain keep itself back, lest it might impede or fetter the beloved object.

"Jennie," said Tyrone, half aloud, in his now lonely room, "I will make myself worthy of your pure and sweet nature if Heaven only help me; and you shall never regret your confidence and your love." Perhaps he grieved at that moment, in his impetuous way, that he had no sacrifice to make and no danger to encounter for her. But life was henceforth a new thing for him.

It was not easy just then to see Jennie alone, and Tyrone was particularly anxious that she should not be exposed to any remark of any kind while she remained under Mrs. Lorn's roof. Still he did contrive to have a few words with her, and two successive mornings early did these lovers have a delightful ramble of an hour's duration in the more secluded parts of Hyde Park—indeed, long before even a "solitary horseman" had broken the stillness of the vacant ride. Tyrone and Jennie had long, long talks, Tyrone talking the more and Jennie listening with delight. There was a delicious joy to her in the mere sound of her lover's voice, wholly apart from the meaning of his words. Tyrone, it may be acknowledged, was delighted to pour forth his whole soul and all his plans, projects, and hopes into the ear of so dear and devoted a listener. This was the freshest and most exquisite sensation life had yet given to him, and he drank it in greedily.

He was full of hope and confidence. He was going over immediately for a few days to Ireland to see what could be done there in the way of retrieving his property. A month ago he had believed it utterly impossible to extract any wreck or remnant worth saving from the ruin into which things had fallen; but now he was full of faith and courage—certain that something could be done—convinced that he knew the way, and could find the persons to do it. Anyhow, he was going to look into all that. His mind was not quite clear as to whether he would go in for the English Bar, and give up the House, or try to settle down in Ireland and live as a modest gentleman. Jennie, however, he declared, should have a share in the decision of these points.

As for Jennie, she was too bewildered and dazzled by the light of the new and strange relationship between her hero and herself to be able to encounter the discussion of any such practical problems. She felt almost as if she had been suddenly turned into a goddess. On one point only she remained clear and firm. Tyrone was for drawing her into an open engagement on the spot—was, in fact, for marrying the first day that public regard for the death of her father would allow. He was fortified by having come suddenly into the ownership of a thousand pounds, as shall be presently explained, and he knew everything would come right. But Jennie was firm in her resolve that nothing should be said or done until he came back from Ireland. She was resolved that until she knew somewhat more clearly than now that a marriage engagement with her would not be a hindrance and a fatality to his own career, she would not allow him to pledge himself to anything.

It might be that even yet there would be a call for a sacrifice, and the sacrifice, if needed, she resolved should be hers. She had grown wondrously thoughtful and wise in a few days, and indeed she could have lived on in ecstasy for years with the prospect of her hero to come for her and take her away at the end of that time.

Those were delightful days—the very rose-time or honeymoon of their young passion. They blended for Jennie the breath of the Hyde Park trees with her old vague dreamings of her Persia. Once she stopped Tyrone, and listening to the murmur of the boughs over their heads, she told him with smiling eyes, in which was just the glitter of a tear, that she had found her Persia at last. Then she described to

him, in a few rapid words, the allusion to her childish dreamings; and she was glad to set him talking again, for the sound of his voice was a delight which she was jealous to lose.

Wise people say that a woman should never (at all events before marriage; some advisers say even after) allow her lover to know that her heart's uttermost devotion is wholly given to him. They say she had better keep him always under the impression that there is something yet left to win, and that thus his constancy will be kept steadily advancing in supposed pursuit of what he already has if he only knew it; as the beetle in the Eastern story is induced to keep always mounting straight up the tower wall in fancied pursuit of the savoury butter which is really on his own head. Jennie was an unwise little girl, without any experience in the way of winning or keeping a lover; and a perverse little girl, who would have despised any such arts if they had been explained to her. So she showed Tyrone her whole heart. If he did not know that she loved him to the very uttermost of woman's capacity to love, he must have been the dullest or most sceptical of men. The depth and fervour of her faith sometimes positively alarmed him. So he told her frankly, thus:—

"Jennie!" They were seated now for a few moments under one of the trees, and the soft sunlight of an early autumn morning lay on the path before them.

She looked up at him.

"I am afraid—I am afraid you think too well of me. I'll do my best, love, but I am not—Heaven knows I am not—deserving of all your high opinion. If you are ever disappointed——"

"Hush! not a word of that," she said, beseechingly. "As if I could be disappointed in *you!*"

"Love, you haven't known me long—you don't know what I have been sometimes; how could girls know anything——"

"I want to know nothing—I don't care. I know that I love you; is not that enough?"

"Some time people may try to make you believe—to tell you things of me—to make you think of me less highly than you do."

"Let them try," said Jennie, with a bright smile; and she added quickly, with colouring cheeks, "People *have* tried

before now—you see with what result. A word or a look of reassurance from you will be more to me than the tongues of half a world. But don't let us ever talk of such things. See. I lay my hand in yours in pledge of my faith in you."

And half playfully, half seriously, she pulled her glove off, and laid her bare hand in Tyrone's. The glove fell to the ground. Tyrone took it up.

"May I keep it?" he asked.

"Keep it," said Jennie, "until I cease to have faith in you."

Tyrone pressed her hand in his, and he kept the glove. Jennie went home that morning with her right hand bare.

In the happy egotism of their talk and their plans, Tyrone had not thought of telling Jennie anything about his unfortunate cousin, whom he had helped to bury at Kensal Green, or of the woman, now widowed, whom he had come to know so strangely, or of the orphan child whom he had pledged himself to protect. Our hero was impulsive in most things, and once launched into a certain current of emotion or talk, was pretty sure to be carried away by it. There was a great deal to be said about Jennie, himself, but little time for saying it; and he was going to Ireland almost immediately. Perhaps he shrunk too from a story which could hardly be told without proclaiming himself as a doer of charitable deeds. So he said nothing of the whole affair, and at last the lovers parted—Tyrone going one way, Jennie another. Our heroine dropped her veil over her glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, and tripped across the Park. Just as the lovers were separating, Carpenter, Mr. Aspar's faithful old follower, crossed their path, and unseen by them, saw them, and was surprised.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

The days went on, and Jennie's position at Mrs. Lorn's grew more and more unpleasant every day. The first painful thing about it was that she had found out her friend and benefactress. This was a hard thing for her, and she had fought against it stoutly, striving not to see any meanness where there was so much generosity, any falsehood where there was so much of genuine good impulse. Nothing hurts the young more than to find out that the friend who has

served them, and whom they fain would love and revere, is not worthy of love or reverence. So Jennie battled for Mrs. Lorn in her own heart, and would, if she could, have talked down reason and evidence, and given truth itself the lie; but she could not. She had quick eyes, and clear intelligence, and truth won, of course. She saw Selina Lorn as she was—mean, trivial, vain, cowardly, full of deceits, which she had not the courage to push on to success, weakly sentimental, weakly sensuous, full of all the small vices of the South, and with only a faint savour of its brilliant virtues.

Once that Jennie had unlearned her faith and reverence for Mrs. Lorn, she became perhaps unreasonably impatient of the weaknesses of the latter. When nobody in particular was expected, Selina loved to lie in bed half the day. Now, our energetic maiden detested women who lay in bed half the day. Mrs. Lorn would send for Jennie, and beg that she would come and talk to her; and Jennie would find her lying on her embroidered pillow, with her hair about her shoulders, dividing her attention between a French novel, which she held in her hand, and a mirror, so placed that she could study her own looks as she lay in bed. Her talk always took its tone from the book she had last been reading, and she never read a strong and healthy book of any kind. She would one day be weakly sentimental, another day full of languid cynicism, and hints about the unreality of everybody's goodness. She would tire Jennie out on Monday with weak religionism—if such a word may be used—with yearnings for the cloister and heaven, and penitence for past frivolity; and perhaps on the following Wednesday she would tell Jennie, with a manner provokingly complacent and egotistical, that she believed she had been born with a contempt for the world's superstitious faiths. She had an evident inclination too, for the study of what I venture to call, without allusion to Mrs. Crowe, the night side of nature —that is to say, all the hidden and ignoble tendencies of human weakness and passion. She liked to take little mental peeps at Sin, and to hint mysteriously that Nature had not many secrets from her. Most of her allusions in this direction, however, were thrown away upon Jennie, who so obviously and blankly failed to understand them, that at last Mrs. Lorn ceased to throw them away.

Mrs. Lorn talked a good deal of her early conquests and flirtations, and gave Jennie lengthy and effusive accounts

of the men who were in love with her, and whom she used to set half wild with her coquetry, which, according to the humour of the day, she now declared that she deeply regretted, and anon vowed that it was the only way to deal with men whose sufferings every woman of spirit must enjoy. All this was insufferable to Jennie, or nearly so; and at last, by dint of hearing stories told to her in quite different ways, she found out that her friend was a liar and had a bad memory. Must the truth be spoken, by the time Jennie was in the house a month, she entirely despised and almost detested her benefactress.

Now in this Jennie was a little unreasonable. There was nothing really very bad about poor Selina. She was only a badly-brought-up, vain, sentimental, and weakly-mendacious woman, cursed with just brains enough to set her playing at intellect, and a bond slave to her eyes and shoulders. A dozen times a day she was pathetic about nothing, only to give effect to those eyes, and cynical merely to draw up, display, and let fall those shoulders. She might have been a much more endurable woman if she had had dull eyes and a scraggy neck. She was capable, as we have seen, of generous impulse, and even of great sacrifice. But, unluckily for Jennie, the present time gave Mrs. Lorn no choice of doing anything in that way, and only her most idle and trivial qualities had a chance of showing themselves.

Mrs. Lorn was, of course, always the heroine of her own stories. To do her justice, she always painted herself as a virtuous heroine; and virtuous she doubtless was, in the vulgar sense of the word. But hers was a virtue which liked to put itself, or at least imagine itself, in situations where it looks as suspicious and out of place as the honest man in the closet of Dr. Caius. Mrs. Lorn had many stories of her triumphant fidelity to her husband, who was so much older than herself—of the wild homage which was offered to her, the temptations she had resisted, the battles, sieges, and fortunes through which her virtue had passed uninjured. Now, we defy the best-intentioned woman in the world to tell this sort of thing to a pure-minded girl (if it were possible that the best-intentioned woman could do so), without making herself seem a little impure in the eyes of that girl, and awakening in her breast a feeling of something like disgust. Then Mrs. Lorn began to hint at something dreadfully mysterious about Colonel Quentin; to express a secret fear of

him, and to hint at the possibility of being rescued from his power by some devoted friend. For the Southern lady often thought to herself that it would be a good thing if she could persuade Jennie to use her evident influence over Philip Quentin to get back her letters for her, and she was trying to open the way to a proposal of this kind.

A change, too, was coming over Theodore in Jennie's eyes. The boy stayed at home much more than he had been accustomed to do, and hung about Jennie and his mother, apparently not caring to go anywhere else. He and Jennie very often breakfasted together, and he would insist on bringing a book to the table and reading out long passages for her, growing quite animated as he read, and gesticulating vehemently. He seemed to have grown much less "mannish" and fast in his ways, and at the same time more thoughtful. But what Jennie's quick eyes observed with most regret was, the manner in which he sometimes fixed an odd, wondering, doubtful gaze upon his beautiful mamma. He seemed to be inquiring within himself as to the identity of the real mamma of the present with the ideal mamma of the past. Sometimes he evidently winced, when some little maternal meanness would display itself, and there were days when he took his mother's caresses rather coldly.

He liked the mornings best of all when he and Jennie had breakfast tête-à-tête, and he declaimed to her from Tennyson, whose "classic things—Tithonus, and Ulysses, and all that lot," he did not think much of; but whose "Locksley Hall," and "Maud," he was wild about. Also, he read the "Bringing of the Good News," by Browning; and he revelled in Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," whereof he could repeat whole yards, until Lara Porsena of Clusium became as familiar a morning sound to Jennie's ears as the postman's knock. For herself, she felt the deepest affection for the boy; and sometimes watched with alarm his suddenly flushing cheek, dreading that perhaps there were some hints of consumption showing themselves, but not in the least suspecting the real truth. She petted him more and more every day, for she saw with deep pain that his mother's defects were beginning to touch him.

Above all things, Theodore still hated Colonel Quentin.

"I say, Jennie, what brings that cad here?" he asked one day, abruptly.

"What cad, Theodore? Such slang!"

"That fellow—you know—Quentin fellow! I wouldn't have such beastly cads about my house if I was mamma."

"But he's a very old friend of your mamma's."

"I don't care; I wouldn't have such friends. I hate him! Tell you what, so does Tyrone."

Jennie blushed slightly.

"Why do you hate him, dear—and why does Mr. Tyrone?"

"Well, perhaps Tyrone don't exactly hate him—I dare say he doesn't think such a fellow worth hating—but he doesn't like him—any one can see that. You don't like him, Jennie, do you?"

"I think I do, Theodore. He is very friendly, and he talks very well."

"Like to catch him trying any of his talk on *me*, that's all."

Jennie smiled, for Colonel Quentin always ignored Theodore's existence, after he had once gone through a formal shake-hands, and she had often observed how Theodore's pride and sense of manhood revolted against such treatment. The boy was often positively rude to his mother's old friend; but Quentin only seemed amused at this.

Now, the truth was, that Jennie had really come to like Quentin's visits and his conversation. He exerted all his skill to please her, and he saw that the best way to please her was by a simple straightforward manliness. He never paid her any compliments, he never talked nonsense, or commonplace, or the ordinary visitor's small talk to her. In the scented, effeminate, almost sickening atmosphere which hung round the place, his coming, now that Tyrone was away, brought the only sensation of strong and simple manhood. He talked to Jennie quite differently from his manner of conversing with Mrs. Lorn. When he spoke to the former, it was always as if he would say, "I find in you a clear and healthy intelligence with which a man's may frankly exchange genuine ideas." There was something decidedly pleasing and flattering in this, even to a girl as free from egotism and vanity as our Jennie. Perhaps, too, the first thing which attracted Jennie's attention to him was the calm and friendly way in which he seemed to recognise all the little weaknesses and meannesses of Mrs. Lorn. He seemed to have for them the pity, half-contemptnous, half-protecting, of a strong genuine nature. Anyhow, Jennie's atmosphere was now enfeebling—he strengthened it; grey and dull, and he brightened it. Therefore she owed him some gratitude.

One day she had insisted on thanking him for the bookcase he had sent her. He stopped her abruptly and almost roughly; but there is sometimes to high-spirited women a mysterious touch of flattery in the bluntness which raises them above the level of babies, who are only talked to in pretty, soothing, and broken language.

"Oh, that little thing? It's not worth speaking six words about, and I sent it to you because it really is yours, and as one friend might send on a thing lost by another. I am not what people call a lady's man, Miss Aspar; if I ever was any thing of the kind, I have quite outgrown it."

"I hate what people call a lady's man," said Jennie, bluntly, "and I don't think you ever could have been anything of the kind." She could not help looking upon his dark, stern face, with its deep-set eyes. Quentin's glance caught her, and she almost coloured.

"Well, no," he replied; "and I never cared for paying compliments to women, or for talking much to women who liked compliments. I like to talk to you because you don't care about such things."

"Isn't that in itself rather a pretty compliment, Colonel Quentin?"

"Is it? Perhaps it is. But I didn't mean it, and I at once apologize. I think I have been for a long time somewhat of a misogynist, because I was crossed in love."

"Indeed? I should never have thought——"

"That any woman could have the heart to cross so fascinating a——"

"No," said Jennie, smiling at his brusque sarcasm, "I didn't mean that at all."

"That I could feel the tender emotion, then?"

"Well, yes."

"But I did. I clung to my sweetheart—as the fine old English phrase was—until the world and the devil carried her away from me. I was madly in love. I can hardly believe how I could ever have been such an idiot, but so it was. We were pledged to each other for eternity at least—for eternity to begin with, and as long after as might be. Well, she left me, and I was taken prisoner in the war, and clapped into Libby prison, in Richmond. Did you ever hear of it?"

"Oh, yes," said Jennie, softly.

"We suffered there, good God! The time went on, but long before I had got into prison my 'fause true love' was

married. I went mad for a while, then I recovered. Now, I thank her from the bottom of my heart every time I see her. What should I have done if the poor creature had remained true and married me?"

"Then you are not sorry?"

"Sorry? I can't imagine what even then I could have seen in her. Not a bad little thing at all—very good in some ways, but such a fool."

"Is she still living?" asked Jennie, for want of anything else to say.

"Still living? Miss Aspar, she is our friend Mrs. Lorn. You may laugh at me if you like, and as much as you like! I declare to you that I once thought her the most glorious and gifted creature in all the world! Well, thank Heaven! she didn't marry me. But she is a kind-hearted woman, with good purposes and a weak nature, and I have a genuine regard for her, and we are good friends."

"She speaks highly of *you*," said Jennie, warmly.

"And I don't speak badly of her, do I? I always prove myself her friend. But I began all this by talking of my want of courtliness. Well, you reminded me somehow of her as she was—I don't know why, for you are ever so much better-looking, and in fact quite different, and so I got into all this burst of confidence."

Mrs. Lorn presently came in, and the confidence closed. But Colonel Quentin had succeeded thus far, that a kind of unavowed friendship and fraternity began to grow up gradually between Jennie and himself. Jennie began to look forward to his visits with a sort of half-weary pleasure. He was a relief at least from Mrs. Lorn.

The worst of that lady, however, was to come. She began to pour out upon Jennie the effusive confessions of her love for Tyrone, and her hopes that she might yet bring him to ask for her hand, and consent to be made rich by her. Jennie found it hard to endure this, and Mrs. Lorn saw her vexation, and though not a very malignant woman, was greatly delighted with it. Little as she knew of the real state of affairs, she was clear enough as to Jennie's condition of mind with regard to Tyrone. She had never forgotten the blush of the girl's face and the droop of her eyes on the day of the Greenwich dinner; and she had never forgiven Jennie for what she considered her audacity. Now that she had an easy way of punishing Jennie, she enjoyed it highly.

Especially it gratified her to hint that Tyrone loved *her*, that only his pride kept him from asking her to marry him, and that he and she secretly understood each other. All this Jennie of course knew to be false, and yet it angered her to hear it.

Selina was going to a dinner-party one evening, and Jennie was summoned to share a preliminary cup of tea with her in Mrs. Lorn's own boudoir. Mrs. Lorn was in one of her moods of languid cynicism this evening.

"I don't know why I go to these places, Jennie," she said. "I don't care about the people, nor they about me. My hostess in especial hates me, I know, because she thinks I flirted with her husband—which I didn't, dear——"

"Oh, no; I am sure you didn't," said Jennie, quite sincerely and earnestly.

"Of course not—at least not with any meaning or malice—except just a little, perhaps, to annoy her and make her jealous. The one temptation I never could resist since I was at school is the temptation to make women jealous. They look so nervous and hot and funny! You are too good for all that, and then you are too young. You haven't seen the world yet. Wait until your turn comes. Those bright eyes, darling, will torment many a woman before long."

"I would rather a great deal be blind or have only one eye," said Jennie, "than torment anybody—man or woman."

Mrs. Lorn shook her head and drew up her shoulders, glancing approvingly at the latter.

"Girls begin with good intentions very often," she said, "but we all get to be much the same as we go on. But my hostess of to-day needn't distress herself on my account—her handsome, stupid husband doesn't occupy much of my thoughts. Oh, Jennie! my thoughts are all on *him*. If I had not you to speak to, I must die or go mad. Tell me now—you are an observant girl, and you have nothing to do but observe—don't you think—speak out as plainly as you like—don't you think he really cares about me?"

"Indeed, Mrs. Lorn, I have never set myself to observe. I don't know. I'm the worst person possible. I don't like to talk about such things."

"But you are not angry, dear child? Oh, I had forgotten all that. You naughty little beauty! Of course I know that you made eyes at my handsome Mr. Tyrone, for all your demureness."

"Mrs. Lorn, how can you——?" Jennie could hardly speak.

"Oh, child, don't let us make any work about it. Do you think I blame you? Not I; it was all quite fair. He told me all about it himself."

"He told you all about what? Who told you?

Jennie was trembling and pale, but she spoke very deliberately, fixing her eyes on Mrs. Lorn, who had not the courage to meet the steady look, but gazed at her slipper and twirled one of her rings.

"Why, Mr. Tyrone, child, of course. He has eyes, you know; and these men are all the vainest creatures. He told me that you were disposed to make love to him, but that of course under present circumstances, he couldn't have anything to do with it; otherwise, my dear, you might have found yourself playing a dangerous game—for you are too sweet and innocent to think of danger."

Jennie was on the point of rising from her chair and giving full vent to her scorn and anger in bitter words that would have much amazed her benefactress—for this young woman had a tongue and a temper which weaker creatures might fear; but as she turned an eye like that of an angry falcon on Mrs. Lorn, and noted the cowering, mean expression of feeble spite and paltry falsehood there, she felt ashamed of any anger, and quietly kept her seat. She only said, coldly—

"You must be mistaken, Mrs. Lorn. Mr. Tyrone is quite incapable of meanness and falsehood."

Mrs. Lorn was a poor translator of other people's emotions. She thought Jennie was humbled and crushed.

"My dear creature"—and she laughed with a little cynical tinkle—"you don't know anything of these men, even the best of them. They all think we are only their playthings—ah! yes, even when they love us. I dare say that Mr. Tyrone has many times told people at his club, and I don't know where else, that *I* am in love with him. I shouldn't wonder at all. I know he is far from perfection, but I have outlived the time when one expects perfection in men. I used to think Philip Quentin a hero once—I used indeed! Oh, yes; I think it is quite likely that Mr. Tyrone has exhibited me as a captive at his chariot wheels, but I don't mind; only I take good care what letters I write to him, for I believe men always show to their friends the letters they get from women."

"I would not marry any man who was so base as that,"

said Jennie, calmly. Then she put down her untasted cup and rose from her chair. "I don't believe there are many men so bad. And I know"—she could not refrain from giving this parting shot, and she waited until Mrs. Lorn should look up and meet her eyes in order that the arrow might have full effect—"if there are any such men, I KNOW that Mr. Tyrone is not one of them."

Then she quietly left the room, and resolved to leave the house that very night. She was hurrying to her own room, doubtless to begin her preparations for departure with a burst of tears. Some sensitive women, while they know that they must have the burst of tears or die when the agony is on them, can yet keep down the tempest until it can be allowed to break forth in decent solitude, where no wondering or prying or pitying eye is on them. Jennie was then hasting away to solitude, when on one of the corridors she encountered Colonel Quentin, who was just being shown into the drawing-room, where he had signified that he would wait until Mrs. Lorn should have finished her tea. Quentin fixed his glittering eyes upon Jennie, and she felt a strange cold shiver through her, knowing that she was found out.

She gave Colonel Quentin her trembling hand—she was doing her best to be quite composed, but the burst of tears had to be restrained now somehow—and he led her into the drawing-room. They both stood near the chimney-piece. Even then Jennie thought, with a strange pang of pride and pain, that there, on that very flower of the gaudy hearth-rug now pressed by Quentin's feet, there stood Tyrone when she entered the room that day—the day on which he asked her to marry him.

"You are troubled about something," said Quentin, in his prompt, sharp way; "that I can see. Is it anything you could tell me?"

"No, Colonel Quentin—indeed it is nothing. I have been out of temper, and tormenting myself——"

"Has *she* been tormenting you—Selina Lorn?"

"Oh, please don't ask me! She has been so kind that I oughtn't to think of things. But I must go away—I have been here too long."

"I thought she had been saying something unpleasant," Quentin replied. "You see, Miss Aspar, I know Selina Lorn. She has plenty of good qualities, but she is a cowardly, vain little creature, with all the small vices of

cowardice and vanity. If you want to do her justice at all, mind what she does—not what she says. She is not half so bad as she gives herself out. If she has said anything to vex you, I dare say she will fall at your feet and beg your pardon. She has done so to me, I can tell you. How should you understand her? What do you know about the sort of society in which she was brought up? Our system down South, when she was young, might have made a strong, good woman into a benefactress, but it only destroyed the natures of weak women. Idleness and the ownership of slaves turn out women like her. You mustn't mind her. Take her as she is. Allow her to do all the kindness she can to you and everybody else, and never believe a word she says."

"I can't stay here, though," said Jennie, firmly. "Wherever I go, I can't stay here. I have stayed far too long already."

"This is not the place for you," Quentin answered—"that I knew from the first. But you are here, and you can't get any harm from her—that I know, now; and if I were you, Miss Aspar, I wouldn't too abruptly run away. Take my advice—it's honest and friendly. Don't allow any appearance of a quarrel. Such rubbish is not for women like *you*."

"Oh, I haven't any idea of a quarrel—and with her who has been so very kind to me! Why, nobody ever was so kind."

"As to that, I don't care a cent for Selina Lorn's kindness. You might as well be grateful to a glass of champagne for its effervescence. But don't mind anything she says—that's all."

"All that grieves me is, that I can't go away with a free heart. If I could only do something for her—to lift off the burden of gratitude! I hate to seem ungrateful to any one—I hate to owe anything now to her. I do—I do! I would almost give my right hand"—and Jennie held out her white and pretty hand, well worth the giving—"to be able to do her the smallest real service."

Colonel Quentin smiled at the eagerness and excitement of the girl.

"I thought women were more likely to give their right hands for the purpose of doing somebody an injury," he said. "So all your satirists say, don't they?"

"I don't know," Jennie answered, doggedly. "I don't care what the satirists say. I know what I feel."

"Then you really would make a great sacrifice for the sake of doing her a service, though she has offended you?"

"Of course I would. Anybody would. How could I bear the idea of being under such obligation to her now? And then, having to leave her! Oh, it is bitter!"

"After all, then, it is not merely for the sake of serving her?"

"Not merely?—not at all, I am afraid. But, oh, please, Colonel Quentin, don't question me, and don't mind what I say."

"Well, this must be thought over. Now, you mind what I say. Do you know that *I* could put you in a position to do Mrs. Lorn a great—a very great service?"

"Could you?"

"Yes! but at a sacrifice——"

"Then I couldn't expect——"

"Miss Aspar, you don't know anything about it—you can't tell what to expect. But this must be thought over. Promise me this—that you wont leave this place, or have any more fights with Selina Lorn, or do anything rash, until I see you again."

"But how long? And how can I tell——"

"Not long. To-morrow, very likely. That isn't much to ask."

"No, indeed; and I have no one to advise me——" and her eyes began to fill with tears.

"Let me advise you, for lack of better. Stay here, and let things pass as they will until I see you again. You will?"

"I will, since you ask me."

"Very well. Now don't let me keep you any longer—I know you want to escape."

She gave him her hand, and then hurried away. She did not think much of his promise, or half-promise, to help her; but his brusque kindness and interest touched her.

Quentin looked after her until the door closed behind her, and then he turned to the large mirror over the chimney-piece, and studied his own face attentively in it, as if it were a picture of which he was the owner, and which had had some damage. Then he turned his back to the mirror, and leaning his shoulders against the chimney-piece, remained thinking and thinking, until the door opening and the rustle of skirts aroused him, and he saw Mrs. Lorn.

His cold, grim way alarmed her, and she stopped in the middle of the room.

"You have been annoying and offending her to-day," he said, without any manner of salutation or preliminary.

"Offending whom, Philip?"

"Stuff! You know very well. The hated rival, Miss Aspar. What things you women are!—I mean some of you. I don't class *her* with the lot."

"You are polite, Colonel Quentin! Has the young lady been complaining to *you?*" Mrs. Lorn was piqued into showing a gleam of spirit.

"Didn't need any complaints. I saw her, and I knew she had just been with you."

"Philip, you are very cruel to me and very unreasonable, and I can't bear it. I have been very kind to her, and I am fond of the child. It was you who made me bring her here."

"Yes; and I believe I did hold out some temptation to you in the shape of a suggestion that you might torment her. But I didn't know her then; I thought she was the ordinary sort of vain, pretty, and egotistic woman—something like yourself, Mrs. Lorn."

"Thanks for the compliment! Well!—and now?"

"Now I don't think so; and I can't bear the idea of her being tormented by you."

"But I don't torment her—how can you say such things?—I don't torment her. All women like to give each other little thrusts sometimes. It is our way, even when we are fond of each other. I remember, when at school, I had a dear friend, Nellie Semper; we loved each other, and couldn't live without each other; but we used to have little quarrels, and I used to try to make her cry, and I used to delight in seeing her crying. But we always made it up the next day."

"Yes, I dare say. But this is a different sort of girl, and deserves better treatment."

"Philip!" She spoke in a low and gentle tone, and approaching him, she laid a hand upon his arm. "Philip, is it really coming to this? Is the inconsolable becoming consoled? I think it—I do think it! The little witch has conquered you, too!"

Quentin looked at her coldly, and almost sternly.

"You and I, Selina, are not exactly the persons to appreciate a girl like *that*. I feel ashamed and abashed when I stand in her presence. You don't, I know."

"Well, no; women don't impress each other in that kind of way. We never think of each other as goddesses and angels. I didn't fancy even that men did when they had

once outgrown their youth. Didn't you think me a goddess once, Philip?"

"I think I did; and yet I don't know how that well could have been, for I saw your follies and faults clearly enough even then."

"If ever woman had her follies and faults flung in her face often enough," Mrs. Lorn said, bitterly, "I have! But never mind me—I am not a goddess now, that much is certain! I thought you had outgrown the time when any woman of any kind could seem angelic in your eyes."

"And so did I," he said, with frank vehemence. "So did I, Selina! I thought nothing on earth could ever make me believe in a woman—in any woman again! And I don't know why I believe in her, but I do. I think she is all purity and goodness—I think she has heart and brains both! Do you fancy I am turning back again into a school-boy? I do sometimes: I feel all the old enthusiasm and romance and stuff reviving in me when I look at her. You may laugh, Selina, if you like; I am inclined to laugh at myself many a time. But I wish I had lived a better life, and always kept the feelings I started with!"

"This is indeed wonderful," said Selina, with a smile. "Was I not right in calling the girl a little witch?"

"I think you were; she has bewitched me—that's certain."

"Why do you tell *me* all this?"

"I don't know; because you said something which drove me on, perhaps. No, it was not that alone—it was to show you that I will have her treated with consideration at least, if not with some better feeling."

"Good heavens, Philip! Have I shown any want of consideration for the girl? She is only a girl after all—not a divinity."

"You cannot see how there may be divinity in a girl?"

Mrs. Lorn only shrugged her shoulders and glanced at herself in the mirror.

"No; of course not. But be kind to her, Selina, and kindness may beget kindness. She may serve you yet; perhaps she has already served you."

He left her without another word. She heard his slow footstep descending the stairs. She ran to the window and looked out, and saw Quentin mount lightly, with true Virginian ease, the horse which was waiting for him, and then ride slowly away.

"He loves her," she said to herself, as she dreamily gazed after him. "Philip Quentin is in love again, and with *her*. What is in the girl that sets men wild about her? Is it her eyes, or her innocence, or her youth, or what? Oh yes, I know it—he is in love with her! Why, his whole face and manner are changed: he is more like his old self than I have seen him for years. It reminded me of the old time—the old, old time! How often I have stood like this and seen him mount his horse and ride away."

As she returned towards the fireplace she too glanced at the mirror, and saw a face which looked for the moment quite haggard.

"I am not growing old," she murmured; "I can't be growing old. How do I come to look like *that?*"

Suddenly his parting words rose up in her memory with a kind of light round them.

"I understand it all," she said, eagerly; "he has forgiven me for *her* sake, and I shall have my letters back and be free!"

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Tyrone has been away in Ireland for many days, and Jennie has not heard from him. She knew she was not to hear from him, and had herself begged that for the present, and while she remained under Mrs. Lorn's roof at least, no letter should pass between them. Still it is lonely and sad to be without him, and without knowing anything of him, after those delightful weeks in Hyde Park. Jennie, beleaguered by tormenting little difficulties and trials of temper, yearns for him with unspeakable love, and passion, and pain.

Meanwhile Tyrone is full of energy, good spirits, and hope. Madame Pinel has handed over to him, insisted on handing over to him, the thousand pounds which he advanced when he was in the flush of his early-spent fortune. To do him justice, in all his personal anxieties, he has refused to take back the money until she has made it clear to him that her house is a success, that she has earned that much money and a great deal more, and that he may fairly accept the repayment of this debt of honour. This, therefore, is the sum of money, the unexpected possession of which made our hero so confident and full of hope. He goes to a bank with which he

once used to have dealings, and deposits several hundreds of it there, not to be touched. He has a long talk with Johanna about the widow of his cousin, which ends in the lonely woman being installed with her child in the house, to have Tyrone's rooms at their disposal while he is away, and to remain there until he returns from Ireland and there is time to think of their future. The expense of their rent and living Tyrone of course will pay—he would pay anything in his present mood of hope and pride. He has many long and melancholy talks with his cousin's wife, and they speak of the property which the little girl may perhaps some day come to inherit. Tyrone frankly tells her that he in any case means to forfeit his chance the first moment he can, but meanwhile there is another possibility—an heir presumptive between Tyrone and the child—and it occurs to Tyrone that if this man could be found anyhow, he might probably be willing to consent to a division of the property between himself and the girl, on condition of Tyrone's putting himself once for all out of the succession. As clearly as he can, Tyrone impresses this upon the widow, and urges her to rouse herself to mental activity for the sake of her child; and she listens calmly and seems to understand.

All this was before Tyrone went over to Ireland. Now he is in Ireland, working hard to pull his affairs together, and see what can be rescued out of the wreck; and he has the comfort of learning that if he had only taken as much personal trouble sooner, something well worth doing might have been done. He is combating Fenianism too with all his might and main, and he finds that it has taken a "powerful grip," as somebody puts it, of the peasant mind, and that the air is filled with vague rumours of an Army of Liberation to land somewhere on the shores of Ireland, and do great things. He finds that his own counsels and measures are falling into a sort of odium, and he is by no means the popular darling and Irish prince that he once was. There are reports already afloat about what is to happen at the next general election, a disturbing shadow looming up already, and Tyrone receives friendly hints that he may not have a very clear prospect of re-election if he does not conciliate more effectively the sympathies of Fenianism. Whereupon our young hero opposes Fenianism more warmly than ever; and with characteristic impetuosity, having all but made up his mind to resign his seat in Parliament, he declares that

now no power on earth shall prevent him from becoming a candidate again at the next election.

Of all this Jennie of course knows nothing. She pined and yearned for her lover. The morning after we last saw her, and after a miserable night, Jennie rose rather late, and had hardly finished dressing, when she was told that her sister Alicia was waiting to see her. Jennie ran downstairs without stopping to finish the arrangement of her hair. She had not seen Alicia for several days, because the Grangers had been in the country, and it seemed to her as if the events that had meanwhile passed, had made her feel quite old as well as proud. She could not make a confidante of Alicia, but yet to see her and kiss her and talk to her would be a delight.

"Oh, Alicia, how beautiful you look!"

Such was Jennie's involuntary exclamation when she saw her sister. For Alicia, always handsome, was usually rather pale and wanting in expression. To-day, however, there was a faint bright colour upon her cheeks, and her eyes sparkled with a peculiar lustre—half proud, half ashamed. Jennie herself looked pale, scared, and haggard, and conveyed the idea of being all eyes.

The sisters had an affectionate embrace.

"But you don't look very well, Jennie?"

"Oh, yes, I'm perfectly well. Don't mind me, dear—I'm all right enough. But how about you? I know you have something to tell me. Nothing bad, I hope and pray?"

"Nothing bad, Jennie—no! Oh, no! But I don't know how you'll take it, dear! I wanted to come and tell you at once. That is why I came so early."

Alicia's manner was calm and composed, and she spoke as deliberately as if she were making a little oration. But she kept her eye fixed on the carpet, and tapped her boot with her parasol, and she did not come to the point at once; that for Alicia might be called embarrassment.

"What is it, Alicia? Tell me at once, dear."

"Well, you know Aunt Granger is very kind, and would be glad to have you with her, and Mrs. Lorn is only a friend——"

"Yes, yes. Well?"

"And then every woman looks forward, I suppose, Jennie darling, to have a home of her own; and a home for me, Jennie, would be a home for you too."

Jennie now began to tremble with sympathy and anxiety. She began to think she knew what was coming. She was on the point of bursting out with, "Captain Cadsby!" but luckily she checked herself in good time.

"Well, dear, you know he was very kind and attentive, and all that, but of course I hadn't the least idea of anything of the sort. It never could have occurred to anybody—to Aunt Lucy, she says, or any one. And it was only yesterday that—that——"

"That he asked you to marry him?"

"Yes, darling. It took me by surprise——"

"Did it? It doesn't take me by surprise. I thought of it long ago."

"Did you, really? I never did. Because of course it's a great honour, and I'm quite willing, and very proud and glad; but Mr. Prinker isn't young, and nobody imagined——"

"Mr. Prinker? Mr. Prinker?"

"Yes, dear. Whom were you thinking of?"

"Oh, nobody—I don't know. Then Mr. Prinker has asked you to marry him?" This was said very blankly.

"Yesterday—only yesterday. Oh, Jennie, in the nicest, kindest way."

"That old man?" said Jennie, in a doleful voice, into which she could not for the moment infuse any tincture of gladness.

"Well, of course he is not young. He spoke in the kindest way about his age. I am so much obliged to him—I like him so much."

"Then you will marry him?" asked Jennie, dolorously. "Have you thought of it, Alicia? You are so young and handsome. He is old. Why, he must be fifty!"

"More than that, dear—fifty-six, he told me."

"Oh, Alicia, darling, I think I wouldn't—oh, indeed I wouldn't."

"Well, I have not exactly promised. But I do like him, Jennie, and I feel very grateful to him. And then, do you know, he doesn't seem so old to me. I think I was always ever so much older than you, Jennie, and I never had your romantic ways and love of poetry and art, and that. I don't think I ever could be in love—in the way people are in books. Do you think you could be?"

If Alicia had only had a little perception, just a little, she

would have read an answer in Jennie's kindling eyes and crimsoning cheeks. Alas! the younger sister had plunged into the very whirlpool of love. The way people are in books? No, indeed! Jennie proudly thought. She had never yet read anything in books which was like *that* emotion.

Alicia, however, was only thinking of her own prospects. Not at all in an egotistical way, for her mind was greatly occupied by the thought that her marrying Mr. Prinker would secure a home for Jennie until Jennie should be carried off by some magnificent youth—rich, handsome, tall, and in all respects worthy of her. Let us say, then, that Alicia was too much engrossed in forecasting the happiness of everybody from her own point of view to take much heed of any other point of view. Jennie's emotion passed, therefore, unseen by her.

"Well, Alicia, darling, if your mind is made up—if you really think you could be happy——"

"I know I could. I have thought of it."

"Oh, dear, how strange! How unlike what we might have imagined! Mr. Prinker! What on earth could have made him think of asking so young a woman to marry him? If it was Aunt Lucy now——"

"Oh, Jennie, don't—for shame!"

"Yes, I suppose so. Very well. But what does Aunt Lucy say?"

"She was a little surprised, of course; but she thinks it quite a good thing. He is an excellent man, and of course he is very rich; and do you know, Jennie, I have been taken with quite a terror of poverty lately—since—you know."

"Yes; one gets demoralized by panic, I suppose," poor Jennie assented, sadly. "Then Aunt Lucy advises this, and Mr. Granger, though I don't care much for his opinion?"

"They all advise it, dear; they are quite rejoiced at it, and offer me congratulations and all that, as if I ought to be the happiest girl in the land. And I am happy, Jennie—really and truly I am."

"I am glad. I am so glad! At least I shall be glad when I come to think it over wisely, and see it in Aunt Lucy's light. But Mr. Prinker! And you are looking so handsome and young——"

"*You* think so, Jennie, but others may not, you know. Then look what we are—two poor girls without any money——"

"And daughters of a bankrupt money-lender, darling, as I have discovered lately."

"I hope, Jennie, we are not the worse for that?"

"I hope not, dear. But I wish we had only known the truth in time. We might have learned how to do something for our support, and not be driven to live like paupers and dependents, or else to marry the first old man who honours us by an offer. Oh, forgive me, my dear, dear sister, for such words! You know my old wickedness and my dreadful tongue. It's only because I am so fond of you; and I am sorry you are not to marry some one whom you could love."

"But, Jennie, I don't love any one in that way—I never did, and I am sure I never could. If all the unmarried men I know were to ask me at one moment, and I had to choose, I think I should be as likely to take Mr. Prinker as any."

"Very well," said Jennie, wearily rising from the half-kneeling position in which she had thrown herself by her sister's chair, where she leant fondly on Alicia's knees, "very well, Alicia. I suppose it is all for the best, and that you will be happy. I couldn't live without love—strong, deep love! I had rather be dead, dead, dead, a thousand times. I'd rather leap into a gulf with somebody I loved. Oh, I think I should like *that* of all things; it would be the best way out of every trouble!"

"Why, Jennie, you talk wildly, child."

"Do I, dear? Then I wont any more. I give you my congratulations, oh my dear sister, and I pray that you may be happy!"

She kissed Alicia wildly, passionately, with choking tears and strong tempestuous emotions which she could hardly have herself explained. She was in grief for Alicia's choice. She was excited by her own love and her present loneliness, and the knowledge that she could not tell of her emotions. She walked to the window, turned her back upon her sister, and put her hand to her eyes and shut out the light for a moment. And in that moment she saw all the past and the present—the strange secluded childhood of herself and her sister; her father's fall and ruin and death; Alicia's sacrifice; her own passionate love; and she seemed, she knew not why, to see for both of them a sad and loveless future.

"There!" she said, returning to Alicia, who was some-

what bewildered by all this, "there! I think that's over, Alicia, and I'll try not to make a fool of myself any more. When is this to be, dear?"

"To be—what, Jennie?"

"Oh, the marriage, of course. It can't be very soon, I suppose?"

"No, it can't be very soon, of course, with poor papa so lately buried." And Alicia's gentle tears welled up. "But Aunt Lucy thinks there is no use in putting a thing off too far, and she disapproves strongly of long engagements."

Jennie could not help thinking that perhaps Mr. Prinker had not much time to spare, but she took care to utter no hint of that kind.

"Then, Jennie, you know that of course you will come and live with *us*. You will have a home with us—Mr. Prinker is very fond of you—until you are married. I'm only afraid, my Jennie, that we shan't have you very long."

Jennie looked blankly at her.

"You have admirers, I can tell you, who don't make any secret to *me*. I don't know what *you* think of it, or whether you have ever thought of it at all; but I dare say you will have to think of it before very long. I haven't said a word to Aunt Lucy, of course, but as he comes very often, and always talks about *you*, I fancy she can't help conjecturing something."

"Then, dear, she has ever so much the advantage of *me*, for I am sure I can't conjecture anything."

"No!—and you see him so often?"

"At Aunt Lucy's?"

"Well, yes; you have seen him at Aunt Lucy's too, and elsewhere."

"Why, Alicia, I never met anybody at Aunt Lucy's but Mr. Prinker—and, oh yes—and Colonel Quentin."

"Well, dear?"

"Well, what is well?"

"You speak of Colonel Quentin. Why not he?"

"Oh, please Alicia, don't talk nonsense—don't, it makes me quite uncomfortable. Colonel Quentin never thought of anything of the kind; it never entered into his mind; it couldn't—it's quite impossible!"

The bare suggestion dismayed and almost bewildered Jennie. But she thrust it out of her way in a moment. The thing couldn't be, and there was an end of it. Alicia was

always taking it into her head that people must be in love with her Jennie.

"Very well," said Alicia, smiling mildly with beneficent and superior wisdom. "Time will tell, Jennie; we shall see." Alicia had already adopted some of the patronizing and almost maternal tone of superiority with which the young lady who is engaged feels herself entitled to treat the young lady not yet engaged. Then she presently took her leave, after having made Jennie promise to come over to Aunt Lucy's that evening and talk matters over. When Jennie kissed her sister's red lips, an odd, almost unaccountable feeling of repulsion ran shuddering through her. She shook it off at once, for it meant that she could not bear the idea of dry and elderly Mr. Prinker having the right to kiss those lips.

"I suppose it's all for the best," Jennie said to herself again and again, always very sadly; "but it looks shocking. To be sure, Alicia never had any of my romantic nonsense about her. She will be happy, I dare say. But is that kind of thing marriage? Why *must* women marry? Why can't we learn to work for our living? Why are we all brought up so?"

These questions were thrust sharply under Jennie's notice of late; for having vowed not to be a dependent, it became necessary to think how she was to become independent while her lover was shaping his career. She was resolved to earn a living meanwhile, but when she came to think how it was to be done, the way seemed to darken with increasing difficulties. She was a clever and shrewd little girl, with all her romance and passion, and she felt convinced she could do half the things that men do just as well as most men, if only she had learned how to do them. But then she had learned nothing of the kind. Alicia could play the piano infinitely better, and Alicia would make a capital housekeeper for some rich and lazy lady. Jennie was not much good at housekeeping. That sort of thing is not learned by rocking, like Victor Hugo's *Sara la baigneuse*, in the branches of a tree. Jennie had spent hours of late surveying and reviewing her own accomplishments, and she had been driven to the conclusion that they did not form a very superior outfit for a practical career in life. Let us make an inventory of her stock and appraise it, as she did.

Jennie could ride a pony capitally.

She could walk many miles.

She could climb a tree, only for the long skirts, and if nobody was looking.

She could play the piano, badly.

She could play the harp, unscientifically, but with a certain wild and thrilling skill, just the kind of performance which genteel mammas would rather their daughters did not learn.

She could talk to anybody, and liked to talk to everybody, except to a fashionable and commonplace person.

She had read most of the fine modern poems, and the best novels of England, France, and Germany. She was very fond of Richter and of George Sand. She was fond of reading history, and especially Carlyle. She really loved Shakespeare, a thing that very few women do; and she was willing to confess that she didn't care about Milton except for little bits here and there.

She could sing, to please herself.

She was not much good at sewing, hated crochet, and was a very bad hand at arithmetic. Her figures hardly ever would add up.

She had a contempt for croquêt.

Finally, she was rather too quick and impatient to make a good teacher of anything, however well she knew it, except under remarkably favourable conditions: she was profoundly in love, perplexed in the extreme, and alternating between despondency and elation.

One should be hopeful indeed to see any ready way to independence, opening out of such qualifications as these. Jennie had to confess to herself, amid all her mourning over the fate of Alicia, that there was a certain sense of relief in having the prospect of a temporary home open to her, while she could look about a little. For with all her sense of her imperfections, she had far too much spirit not to think that there must be some way in which a resolute and intelligent woman could earn her bread. She had read ever so often, in novels, about gifted and destitute heroines who, driven to their last resources, had taken their drawings to picture-shops, and after several rebuffs, had at last found the appreciative shopkeeper who discerned at a glance the value of those masterpieces of amateur art, and bought them at any price and kept on buying them until the time when the conditions of the story allowed the hero—now rich—to come forward and claim his bride. Jennie used to draw and paint at

one time, and in a burst of hope she pulled out a lot of her handiwork and gazed at the specimens. In all her anxiety she could not help laughing at the pink-and-white cheeks of the lovely women, the limbs of the animals, the curling moustache of the heroes, the gummy smoothness of every surface, the careful distinctness of every outline. She had not looked over these things for years, and once she used to think they were well done. They did her good now, for they made her laugh in spite of herself.

"The appreciative purchaser can't be found for these even in a madhouse," she said. And she laid them tenderly on the fire.

Meanwhile, Jennie was firmly resolved not to remain under Mrs. Lorn's roof longer than that night, come what would; and as she had money (her share of Tyrone's repudiated property) she did not see why a lodging, for which she could pay, might not be found somewhere for her. Of course, such a proposal would be met with horror by Aunt Lucy, and of course there would be room and a welcome for her at Aunt Lucy's as long as she chose. But, in truth, Jennie anticipated so much objection and argument from Aunt Lucy to any proposal that one of her nieces should earn a temporary living, and she saw so much ignoble inquiry and discussion looming up when Tyrone's proposal and his affairs should begin to be talked of, that she positively longed to plunge at once into independence, and be done with all protection and all advice. Her heart sickened at the thought of the scrutiny and comment to which her hero must be exposed in her hearing, when Aunt Lucy and Mr. Granger and their friends should begin to talk the matter over. It is needless to say that Tyrone's personal pride had never been a secret to the girl who loved him so, and who feared that she would have enough to do to reconcile him to the idea of her striving to keep herself in independence while he worked his way towards fortune and fame. Jennie thought over this with many sad misgivings. She was growing preternaturally wise in her love. "It will take him a year at least," she thought, "to put his affairs in any order, and prepare for a new career. During that time, only think of his being every day—in his absence and in my presence—subjected to the wondering criticisms and speculations of Aunt Lucy! I never could keep my temper—never, never! And yet if I were living, a dependant upon her? No, no, let the difficulty be never so

great of persuading Tyrone, it would be less great than the pain and humiliation of enduring Aunt Lucy. I wish I could run away," our perplexed heroine thought, "and hide myself in the depths of, say Islington or Clerkenwell, and come back exactly at the right time!"

Perhaps it was after the exquisite delights of her two Paradise-mornings in the Persian-heaven of Hyde Park, that these little realities of vexation, embarrassment, and uncertainty made themselves seem so very trying. Jennie scolded herself for being so weak, and then leant her head upon her hand, and thought if she could only see him for a moment again and hear him speak, she would be strong and brave enough for anything. She was surprised and frightened to find, that love itself was not enough to sustain one always in the absence of the loved one. A month ago she would have thought that the possession of his love could have upborne her against years of separation. Now, he had been away a few days, and she felt herself sinking and sickening in his absence.

She began, however, to do something—to pack up her things and make ready for her departure. Meanwhile, she felt the strangest, saddest weight upon her because of Alicia's marriage. In vain she told herself that it would just suit Alicia. She could only think of her sister as about to be buried. Little kindnesses done and said by Alicia—some, years ago when they were children, some last month, came up to her mind every now and then, bringing with them that keen pang of grief which runs through us when we recall to recollection some tender word or loving look of one who has died and left us.

Jennie had been up so early, that she seemed to have been stirring half the day when breakfast-time came. Mrs. Lorn, as usual, did not appear at the table. Theodore, as usual, came to breakfast with a book in his hand, and favoured Jennie with readings therefrom, in the course of which he frowned and puckered up his lips, and rolled his eyes and clenched his fist in unconscious dramatic illustration of his author's powerful passages. Jennie was hypocrite enough to encourage and prolong the recitation, by looks and ejaculations of approval and admiration; for she did not want to talk. But she did not succeed, for Theodore suddenly put down his book, and abruptly asked—

"Were you ever in Ireland, Jennie?"

"Never, Theodore,"—with a faint rising blush.

"Nor I; but I'm going soon."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; Tyrone's going to take me. He couldn't this time, but next time, I think. He's going to take me when there's an election somewhere. I should like to see an election in Ireland. Such jolly fun, you know!"

"I suppose so" (rather blankly).

"You wouldn't be afraid, Jennie? Not you—you are not that sort, a bit! Mamma says *she* would be afraid. But mamma isn't going, anyhow. I say, Jennie! don't you think Tyrone's greatly changed of late?"

"I have not known Mr. Tyrone a very long time, dear." (Thinking in her own mind that she only seemed to have begun life when she first knew him.)

"Ah, then you wouldn't notice! Awfully changed, I think."

"In what way, Theodore?"

"Well, he's got so grave, and kind of melancholy, and doesn't go about much. Cadsby says he hardly ever meets him anywhere now; sowing his wild oats a little too fast, Cadsby says; overdoing the thing. But Cadsby's a fool, you know," Theodore added, decisively.

"Captain Cadsby is not very brilliant or wise, I fancy," said Jennie, viciously.

"No; but there's something up with Tyrone, though, you bet—I mean I am sure there is, Jennie. Mamma thinks so, too. Should you think he was hard up, Jennie?"

"Hard up, dear?"

"In a tight place, you know—money, and that? *I* am afraid so," said Theodore, shaking his head with sad wisdom. "I'm so sorry—he's real splendid; too splendid for anything," the boy added, his reminiscences of American phraseology now and then forming a sort of mosaic with his London-acquired slang. "Fact is, Jennie, Tyrone isn't a man who can get on without lots of money, I'm afraid. I don't suppose I could either. I wish he had a lot of money! Yes; he's going to take me over to Ireland with him one of these days. He has a castle there—ruined, you know."

"Ruined, I suppose," said Jennie, with a half sigh, which was instantly driven away by the thought that if he had a a castle which was not ruined he might perhaps never have been thrown in her way.

"Do you know, Jennie, that he had an ancestor—it must

have been an ancestor of his, surely—a great Tyrone, who once defeated the English?"

Jennie was not strong in Irish history, and didn't know.

"Oh, yes! Where do you think I found it out? In 'Rokeby,'—Scott, you know—in the notes. Listen here." He ran for the book. "'The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English, was in a battle fought near Blackwater.' Scott himself says that, and then he quotes from some old history by an English writer; queer old spelling—you must look at it, Jennie, to see how it is spelt—'When the English entered the place, and thicke woods beyond Armagh, on the east side, Tyrone, with all the rebels assembled to him, pricked forward with rage, envy, and settled rancour against the Marshall, assayled the English, and, turning his full force against the Marshall's person, had the success to kill him, valiantly fighting among the thickest of the rebels. Whereupon, the English being dismayed with his death, the rebels obtained a great victory against them. I term it great, since the English, from their first arrival in that kingdom, never had received so great an overthrow as this, commonly called the Defeat of Blackwater.' And a lot more about it, you see. I must ask Tyrone. I suppose it was an ancestor of his?"

"I suppose it was, Theodore."

"But, Jennie," said the boy, "you're not offended, surely? Of course I oughtn't to have read that to you."

Jennie looked up, colouring and confused.

"Because, of course, an English girl wouldn't like to hear of any one defeating the English."

"It's a long time ago," said Jennie, greatly relieved, "and I don't think I mind it much, Theodore."

"I'm glad of that. Of course, in any case, you wouldn't have any ill-feeling to Tyrone—our Tyrone—about it?"

"None at all, dear. I'm sure it wasn't his fault; and anyhow, I forgive him."

"Come now, I like that! We mustn't keep up these old hatreds, you know. No Tyrone has conquered *you*, Jennie! You don't hate our Tyrone, I am sure."

In the middle of their talk a card was brought for Jennie. She could not help reddening as she took it. It was from Colonel Quentin.

Theodore brusquely took it up.

"Oh, I say!" he broke out, "*you* wont see that beastly cad?

It's mamma he wants, I suppose, not you, Jennie; and mamma isn't up yet. Send him away—not at home—anything you like."

"No, dear," replied Jennie; "it's to see me, and not you mamma, Colonel Quentin has come this time."

"But you don't want to see him, I know."

"Indeed I do, though."

Theodore made a gesture of impatience and discontent, and ejaculated his familiar remonstrance, "Oh, I say!"

"Come, Theodore, you ought not to be so prejudiced against Colonel Quentin. A philosopher, like you, ought to be above prejudices. Anyhow, dear, I must see him now."

"You won't be long?"

"I think not; I don't want a very long interview."

"No, I should think you didn't! Coming back to this room, Jennie?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Then I'll wait for you."

So Jennie went her way, thinking with pain of having to leave Theodore, and grieved even to have to tell him of the parting; and at the same time a little embarrassed, for several reasons, about her meeting with Quentin. Our little maid paused for a moment on the threshold of the drawing-room, where she was to see him—a room which seemed dedicated for her to exciting interviews and unexpected announcements. She paused a moment to collect her senses. Of late she had had occasion more than once to make up her mind quickly, and the practice proved useful this time.

A kind of light came over Quentin's dark face when he saw her.

"I am much obliged to you," he said, at once, with hardly any formal salutation, "for taking my advice, and not leaving this house without a little consideration. I don't know whether you allowed the sun to go down upon your anger."

"I hadn't any anger in this instance—none, I assure you! I was a little disappointed, and I could not go on acting as if things were different."

"Then you have made up your mind?"

"I have, indeed."

"You are going away?"

"Yes, Colonel Quentin."

"May I ask where?"

"You may ask, and I wish I could answer; but I don't know—yet."

"When and where are you to know?"

"To-night, perhaps. I am going to see my sister, at Mrs. Granger's, and talk things over."

"Well, you will be cared for, no doubt. But you spoke yesterday of being under obligation—or at least, feeling some sense of obligation—to Mrs. Lorn, and I offered to put in your hands the means of redeeming any such obligation tenfold, twentyfold——"

"You did; and it was kind and generous of you. But I have thought that matter over, Colonel Quentin, already; and I know that I mustn't avail myself of your kindness."

"But you don't even know what I would ask you to do!"

"No; and I think I had better not know."

"You can't suppose I would ask you to do anything which could place you in any disagreeable position?"

"Indeed I don't; but I had rather get out of this dilemma as I have got into it, my own way, Colonel Quentin."

"You don't like the idea of being mixed up in any sort of co-partnership with *me?*"

"I don't like the idea of being mixed up in any sort of co-partnership with anybody," Jennie answered, with a smile.

"Even for a generous purpose?"

"Even for a generous purpose when it isn't mine, and can be carried out much better without me. Is it in your power greatly to serve and oblige Mrs. Lorn? Then why not do so, and have the reward for your own heart as well as the good purpose?"

"Because," he said, coolly, "I don't care one single rush about serving *her*, but much about pleasing you. Have you not even enough of a woman's curiosity to wish to know what kind of service this is which I propose that you shall render to our dear friend upstairs?"

"Oh, I have curiosity enough to serve for any woman," said Jennie, faintly blushing, "but I don't care to know anything about this little mystery. I heard you say once, Colonel Quentin, that women are wanting in a sense of honour—towards each other, at all events. Well, now, I think it is something like a sense of honour which tells me not to ask what all this is, or to have anything to do with it without the knowledge of Mrs. Lorn."

"Then if the sword were suspended over your friend's

head you would not withdraw it, if you had a chance, until you had first obtained her consent to be saved?"

"I don't know; I can't argue; I can't explain; and metaphors and analogies only bewilder me. But I see this much clearly enough, that this mysterious service can be rendered to Mrs. Lorn much better by you, who know all about it, than by me, who know nothing, and that I mustn't act blindfold. There, now, will you, like a good friend, not ask me any more about it?"

"Very well. It will come to the same thing. *You* only, and not I, will have done her the service all the same. Now, as I have given you your own way, listen to me for a moment. One of the motives I had in coming to this country was to punish that wretched woman. I was madly in love with her once, and she fooled me to the top of my bent, played with me, and threw me away. I despised and hated her, all the more because in my first rage I degraded myself. Well, I had the means of punishing her by standing between her and her dearest hope. I believe she is really and truly in love now, and I could spoil her whole game at any moment. Do you see that bundle of letters?"—and he produced a thick packet—"Any one of these would ruin her to-day in the eyes of the man she has set her heart on. Mind, she was never a bad woman: only a fool, who must always carry on the most harmless flirtation in the language of Indiana or Lucrezia Floriani."

"But I don't want to hear all this. I have no right to hear it. It is wrong of you to tell it to me."

"Well, right or wrong, that was my purpose—that was my plan of revenge. Then, when I changed that, I still meant to forward other plans—plans of my own—by her aid, and to force her to do my bidding by this terror held over her."

"Oh, for shame! How could you do anything so cruel and mean? I cannot believe it of you."

"Can't you? You don't know how one grows mean who has loved mean things! I do. No matter. I change my purpose wholly. I shall not persecute her any more. Take that packet and give it to her, and tell her it is given up for your sake alone." He offered her the letters.

"Not I," said Jennie, composedly. "Do the right thing yourself manfully. How little you must know of women, Colonel Quentin, when you could seriously make such a proposal! Don't you see that any woman of spirit would only

hate me if I made myself the bearer of such a message? I feel that the cruellest and wickedest blow I could inflict on one who has been so kind to me would be to go to her with a message like that. I am ashamed to have heard even so much, and my heart is only filled with pity for her. How can you be so hard if you ever really cared for her?"

"You don't know," he replied, angrily, "what it is to be disappointed and fooled! You don't know what it is to waste years and years of love on a wretched, worthless thing, and only to be flung away in the end. If ever you *do* know it——"

"If ever I do," said Jennie, turning pale and preparing to quit the room, "I shall pray to Heaven to leave me my self-respect even if everything else is gone. Good-bye, Colonel Quentin."

"Stay; don't go yet. I want to speak to you. Yes, I want to speak to you very earnestly indeed, but not about *that* any more. Miss Aspar, I have led rather a wild life, but I am not a bad man. I have begun of late to see a new existence opening up to me, perhaps. I have some brains and ambition, and I am not poor; and I have strange, splendid prospects. Such a man as I might still have a career before him, might he not?"

"Surely he might."

"I am not too old. Come, tell me, am I?—am I?" He spoke with unusual impatience.

"The idea's absurd. Why should you ask me?"

"But tell me."

"Of course you are not too old."

"Then perhaps I am not too old for you to care for me, to think of me as a husband?" He caught her hand before she could prevent him. "Jennie, I love you! You are the only woman I could love. I never thought I could have such a feeling again."

Jennie made no unseemly struggle to withdraw her hand. Instinctive good sense and propriety told her that with so sudden and impetuous a lover composure and self-restraint were her best assurances.

"I did not expect this, Colonel Quentin."

"I know. How should you? You are not one of the women who spend their hours in idly speculating on the meaning of every man who approaches them with a civil word. You thought I was only a friend."

"I did, indeed!"

"You were mistaken, Jennie. I am a lover. I ask you to be my wife! I see in you all the capacity and spirit and force of character that the fools we meet in society never could understand. I feel that with you life would be worth having. Be my wife, Jennie! I pledge myself to make you a husband of whom you shall never be ashamed. Be my wife."

His eyes gleamed like coals, and his hand which still held hers, trembled through all its sinewy fingers.

"I cannot, Colonel Quentin—I cannot, indeed. Oh, how I wish you had never asked me! Why did you destroy our friendship? I liked you as a friend."

"You must be my wife, Jennie."

"Never, Colonel Quentin."

He smiled grimly.

"Why not? You will say you don't love me. You needn't tell me that. I know you don't love me in that romantic sort of way. But I have passed the age when one thinks a girl's first love eternal, Jennie. I am content to wait for your love. It will grow; it *shall* grow. I want a companion and an equal. So do you."

She shook her head.

"I don't want anything, Colonel Quentin, and never could marry unless——"

"You needn't go over all that. I know it already. I can wait. What can a girl like you do drifting about London?"

"Then would you really be content to marry a girl who only married you to save herself from the necessity of earning her living? If I were a man I would rather die than take a woman on terms like that."

"I'll take *you* on any terms, I don't care what, because you are worth buying at any price—and the rest would come. I tell you, Jennie, if you married me, you would come to love me in the end, and I could wait. You are not offended?"

"I am not offended," said Jennie, sadly; "perhaps I ought to be. I'm sure I don't know. I don't know what the right sort of thing is for a girl to do, and I can only follow just the impulse of my heart, and I don't see why I should be offended. I don't even mind your calling me by my name, for I am sure you don't mean to offend me, and I am only sorry for this! I suppose you are sincere in what you say, Colonel Quentin, and I am deeply grateful, indeed, indeed I am. But oh, please, don't let us speak of this any more! I can't marry you—

ever. You can easily get a better wife anywhere. But don't think of me. It never can be."

"I don't ask why," he said, "although perhaps I can guess. But I am not discouraged, and I think only the better of *you*. Perhaps you will think the better of me when you find—as I once found—how utterly unworthy is the person to whom you would give your love——"

"Hush, Colonel Quentin! Not a word more, or I shall hold you to be an enemy, and hate you."

He only smiled.

"I don't want to pain you or vex you," he said, "but I should not think your hate of to-day the worst possible omen for the future. Well, Miss Aspar, since it seems to distress you, I will withdraw my suit, for the present. Let us be friends again."

"I don't know—I fear that can hardly be. I wish you had not spoken——"

"Come," he said, with a sort of good-humoured brusqueness, "you are not the silly girl to think yourself bound always to keep at daggers drawn with a man merely because he has asked you to marry him, and you wouldn't. If anybody is aggrieved, I am. You ought to ask me to forgive you."

"So I do, with all my heart. There!"

"And I forgive you with all my heart. There!"

"And you wont, any more——"

"Not now, at all events. Come, no turning pale and trembling! The thing is all in your own hands. I can't force you to marry me if you are unwilling. I am not an Obi man, as the negroes would say. I can't use magic! My meeting you now and then can't make you fall in love with me, I suppose, or marry me unless you like. But I can't afford to lose your friendship. Come, give me your hand."

She gave him her hand, not quite without reluctance. He fastened his glittering eyes upon her, and there was an odd exultant light in them.

"The world comes to him who waits," he said. "I'll wait! Anyhow, Miss Aspar, you have done some good this morning for your friend upstairs."

He had left the room before—having looked down to avoid the glitter of his eyes—she had ventured to look up again.

In the corridor he met Theodore, who was growing impatient of Jennie's absence.

"See here, my little man," Quentin said, taking him by the collar, and turning him round so that he could look in his face. "Will you just give that packet to your dear mamma, and say I sent it to her at Miss Jennie Aspar's special request?"

"I don't generally carry messages," Theodore replied, extricating himself angrily. "You had better speak to one of the servants."

"Civil little boy! But your mamma wouldn't like this to be entrusted to any servant, my young friend, nor would Miss Jennie."

"Put it there!" said Theodore, pointing grandly to a table. "If it is from Jennie——"

"It is, I assure you. That's another thing, I suppose?"

"Quite another thing. Good morning."

Colonel Quentin laughed and went downstairs. When he had gone, Theodore took the packet to his mother.

Jennie was still standing by the fireplace, wondering whether she really was now released from her strange admirer, wondering what was to come next, when a rushing of trailing skirts was heard, and Mrs. Lorn, in the picturesque dishabille of a crimson cashmere morning gown, loose around her white neck, and with her hair falling over her shoulders, swam into the room, flung herself on Jennie, and clasped the girl to her breast.

"Oh, you sweet, sweet darling girl! Oh, you truest, best of friends! Oh, you love, to whom I was so ungrateful in my soul! Jennie, Jennie, my darling, you have saved me!"

## CHAPTER XXV.

Colonel Quentin crossed the Park and emerged on Piccadilly, and walked thoughtfully along that street, down St. James's Street, and into Pall Mall. He was smoking, and looked grave and even grim. He met several acquaintances, but he did not stop to speak to any one; only saluted and passed on. Quentin had already a great many acquaintances in London.

About midway along Pall Mall, as he went towards Trafalgar Square, Quentin stopped at a house on his left, the side of the street which was not that of the great clubs. This was a house divided into offices. On the ground floor was a

Wine Company; on the basement floor a Patent Scouring-sand Company; on that which would in a private house be called the drawing-room floor, were the offices of the New Potosi (Arizona) Mining Company, London Agency, West End Branch. These were the offices of Colonel Quentin, who had thus set himself up as the London agency of the Company, and was working the business pretty vigorously. The offices consisted of a room looking on Pall Mall, which was that of Quentin himself; a clerk's or secretary's office; and a small reception room. Quentin still lived at the Langham, and had inaugurated the London agency of the New Potosi Mining Company by various dinners, champagne luncheons, and other festivities there, whereby he had made a good many acquaintances, and was becoming popular among certain sets of people. Mr. Prinker was one of those whom Quentin specially impressed, and who took a liking to him. Prinker was first drawn towards Quentin by the contrast between him and his boisterous companion, General Macan. Then he began to admire Quentin's unvarying temperance and general discretion, and at last he grew to have a considerable faith in him. Quentin was often seen in the lobby of the House of Commons with Mr. Prinker, and through the latter came to know several other Members of Parliament, and through some of these a few journalists.

Colonel Quentin, still with his cigar, sat at his desk in his office, and began to open and read his letters. But his mind was all disturbed and astray. An untoward event had broken through the orderly course of all his plans and calculations. He had come over to London in the full belief that he had outlived all the passion of youthful romance, and behold he now found that fire had only gained strength with his manhood. He had been foiled by a bright-eyed girl; he was wildly in love with Jennie Aspar, and having fought long against the madness and found that he could not crush it, he had now set his whole soul on gratifying it, and was as yet convinced that he must succeed. Poor Quentin had led really a very lonely sort of life, and being full of passion had had it all smouldering and banked up within him so sullenly, that even he believed it dead. Now it had all blazed out; he felt it like a paroxysm, like a rush of blood to the head. His Southern nature and the fervour of his mother's temperament were in him. He tried to give himself still the credit for ambition and good sense, by persuading himself

that Jennie Aspar was just the woman who could help him on his career, but he knew in his soul how poor an afterthought this was; and that he was mad to have her just because he loved her, and for no other reason. But he was as yet bewildered and dismayed by the strength of the passion which had broken out in him; as a man habitually sober, who has incautiously drunk too much wine, is amazed and shocked to find that his reason and his power of speech have nearly left him, while he has still reason enough to know that they are vanishing, and that he is not himself.

To-day Quentin is specially excited, for he has committed himself to Jennie Aspar, and his egotism, vanity, and weakness insist that as he has shown his hand, he must win the game. Passionately in love with her as he is, his egotism can still assert itself, and cause him to vow that he is not to be played with by a girl *this* time! and that he is bound to win. As yet, though he sees some of the difficulties, he believes he must win.

Colonel Quentin is not very long over his letters, when he is told that a lady wishes particularly to speak to him. A quivering light of surprise passes over his rigid face; but then he grows cool and blank again, for he knows it cannot possibly be Jennie Aspar. So he bids that the lady be shown up, and he rises to receive her, and she proves to be Mrs. Lorn. He is not rejoiced. They are left alone.

"Philip, you wonder that I have come to disturb you. You don't want me, I know; but I had to come; I must get your advice, and I must thank you. So I came all alone, and in a hansom cab! Think of it, Philip!"

"Of the cab, Mrs. Lorn?"

"No, no—you know; of my strange escapade!"

"I fancy Pall Mall is pretty safe in the daylight," Colonel Quentin answered; "and even if the cabman should prove a Lothario, there are generally policemen round." He was in no humour for anybody's romance but his own.

"Philip! Well, I see you don't value any appeal of mine; but I must thank you all the same."

"Can't you thank me sitting down?" He hands her a chair.

"Thanks. I am so grateful to you, Philip, for my letters—my poor, foolish, schoolgirl letters! Ah, how weak and fond I was then! And now all so changed! How hard we have ll grown," and she shrugged her shoulders, although they

were covered now by a lace shawl and a Cashmere dress. "But there is something else. I know you do not care for thanks. This girl is leaving me."

"Miss Aspar?"

"Jennie Aspar; yes, did you know? The ungrateful little thing!"

"I knew she was going away from you."

"Did she tell you so?"

"She did."

"Why, Philip! Are you on such terms, already?"

"Miss Aspar told me she was leaving your house. I advised her to do so."

"And you compelled me to receive her."

"I did; but I had other views then. I shouldn't like a girl in whom I had any great interest to be under your care, Selina. You are too weak and spiteful, and too fond of reading French novels and talking about them. You don't suit her."

"Has she been saying all this—to you?"

"Not a word of it."

"How came you and she to talk of *me*, at all?" Mrs. Lorn asked with quivering lips and reddening cheeks.

"In fact we did not talk much of you, Selina; but you and I don't intend to quarrel, anyhow."

"Then you wish me to let this girl go?"

"Why, certainly. What control could you wish to have over her?"

"But I don't understand this. I should like to serve you if I could—I should indeed, Philip, and I thought you wished me to keep her under my own influence?"

"Not now, Selina."

"Tell me one thing, Philip. Do you mean to marry this girl?"

"I do, if I can."

"But you always called her—you know—it is humiliating to me to say it."

"Say it out, Selina; never mind the humiliation before *me*."

"You always called her my hated rival, and laughed at me."

"Well?"

"Well, if she was then my hated rival, who now is your hated rival?"

Quentin smiled.

"Do you think, Mrs. Lorn, I haven't looked all that plain

and squarely in the face? Do you think I don't know as well as if she told me that she's in love with your Tyrone, or thinks she is? I do know it, but I am not discouraged. You and I, my dear Selina, know what the value of a girl's first love is. I hope to persuade her to get over that. I hope *you* may have as good a chance, Selina, in your case."

Mrs. Lorn rose with an emotional rustle of skirts.

"You go on, Colonel Quentin," she said, "as if I were likely to pursue Mr. Tyrone."

"And don't you intend to?" Quentin asked, quite gravely; "I really thought you did. For my own sake I hope you do; I have my own stake in the game, as you know, and you see I have left you quite free to your captivation. I have no longer any hold over you."

"Philip, I wish you did not speak of things in that degrading way."

"Well, I go in for realities, and I have allowed you to see plainly enough what *I* am trying to do. But if you like to wrap things up in pretty sentimental vagueness you can do so for yourself. Now, Selina, listen. You can help me, and I am helping you in trying to help myself. Let me tell you some news. Your friend, Mr. Tyrone, is in love with Miss Aspar."

Selina covered her face with her perfumed handkerchief.

"You know it, do you?" he asked, impatiently.

"Oh, I fear it is true! I hate the little creature, and I hate myself for being so weak, and you, Philip Quentin, for knowing it! Well, I suppose he is, but it can't last long, that kind of thing! He is young and the girl is pretty—that I admit. I can wait; let him make love to her! Perhaps, Colonel Quentin, it is more your affair than mine."

Quentin looked at her with a very peculiar expression, and her angry eyes drooped under his. His look was one which carried with it a sting of contempt, worse for a woman than a blow.

"You are mistaken, Mrs. Lorn," he said, coldly; "your friend has asked Miss Aspar to marry him."

"It is a lie!" she exclaimed, flinging her crumpled handkerchief on the table as if she were throwing it in somebody's face. "It's a lie, if she says so—if anybody says so; he never did!"

"*She* never said so; but it's true for all that, Mrs. Lorn. I know it as well as if I made one of the tête-à-tête."

"How do you know?"

"A dozen things tell me; her looks, her expression at certain moments of our conversation, her manner when I spoke of him, or, rather, in the remotest way alluded to him; and I know that they have walked together in the Park of mornings, when you, my unsuspicious Selina, were asleep."

"The wicked, ungrateful girl!"

"Truly—to so disinterested a benefactress! My dear Selina, you brought the girl into your house to play your own game and mine, and she partly outwitted us both—that's all! I bear her no malice."

"I do: I hate her."

"Naturally, my dear; that is the way of women. And I am glad of it just now, because you can still help me and I you. Listen, Selina. I am not dashed by all this. I can forbid the banns, Mrs. Lorn, with your help."

"Only show me the way!"

"Well, to begin with, you must understand that Miss Aspar is a person of quite different order from you and me. We have no weak prejudices in favour of virtue, Selina, have we? But she has. She is purer of soul now, my sweet friend, than you were, I should say, even in your cradle. This fellow, Tyrone, is a good fellow enough, but a little wild and that sort of thing. Now, don't you think something could be found out and made clear to her—something that a girl of that sensitive character ought to know? I believe in my soul she is capable of rejecting any lover for things that you, Selina, would only shrug your pretty shoulders at and affect not to see. Down in Dixie, you remember, we made great allowances for young men and their toys—didn't we? Take my word for it, she would not do so."

"No doubt she is an angel!" Selina said, scornfully, and palpitating wildly.

"The nearer she is to the angels, Mrs. Lorn, the better chance, in this case, for you and me. I can't very well move in the matter; but you can easily find out everything—devise something—throw something in his way—do anything of that kind. Surely I needn't explain to a woman! Selina, we are made colleagues now by fate rather than goodwill. I tell you I have set my heart on marrying this girl, and if you can help me it is your one solitary chance of helping yourself to the desire of your heart. And—will you believe it—I should be glad to see you successful? Apart from in-

terest and everything else, I should be glad. I feel a sympathy with you—I pity you—for am not I rowing in the same boat?"

He took her hand in his rather gently, and she looked up at him, hardly understanding.

"Yes," he went on, "only think of it! You and I, both pretty well worn out in the world—think of our turning young again—you going mad about a conceited young Irish beggar, and I losing my wits for a pretty little schoolgirl! Well, Selina, this is my last madness! Let us help each other in our folly. I have given you a hint: I needn't say any more. If you can profit by it I know you will. Good morning; let me see you to your carriage—I mean, cab!"

"Good-bye, Philip," Mrs. Lorn said, fixing her dark eyes on him. "And so it has really come to this? You do really love her, and you and I are friends at last—only friends and nothing more! Once I should have thought anything possible—anything but that!"

She dropped her veil and he conducted her to her cab, in which she only drove to the corner of a street near her own house.

Quentin smiled grimly as he returned to his desk.

"Strange," he thought to himself; "I have positively acquired a value in her eyes because she knows that I love another woman and don't care about her! One gets to understand women only when it is too late."

"That ungrateful, deceitful, wicked girl!" Mrs. Lorn exclaimed, in the presence of Theodore, that same evening. "I am glad she is going!"

"What girl are you talking of, mamma?" Theodore asked, with puckered lips and brows.

"That thankless creature, Jennie Aspar!"

"Jennie Aspar's the best girl in all the world, and it's a shame! And it isn't a bit like you, mamma, to talk of her so—and I'm glad she's going, too, when people don't appreciate her."

He jumped from his chair and walked angrily up and down the room.

"Has she bewitched you, too?" said Mrs. Lorn. "I do believe it! Come here, Theodore."

The boy drew near, blushing and rather sullen.

"Let me look in your face. Why, child, how red you are! I do declare I think you are one of Jennie Aspar's lovers, too!"

"Well, I don't care!" Theodore illogically replied, extricating himself with the manner of one who doesn't choose to be reconciled; "but I know it's a beastly shame!"

Mrs. Lorn went to her own room, and first cried and then stormed, and then cried again, and finally softened down into the sentimental and the generous. She so overwhelmed Jennie with tenderness when the parting moment came that the girl felt penitent because she had not better deserved such affection. The traces of the tears of malice and spite and humbled vanity which still remained on Mrs. Lorn's cheeks did excellent service in lending an appearance of sincerity to the lamentation with which she bade the hated rival farewell.

"I'll not say good-bye, Jennie," cried Theodore; "I'm coming to see you every day."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Some months went away and brought a change in the position and relations of many of our people. Mr. Prinker is married to Alicia Aspar, and has taken a large and solid-looking house immediately out of one of the squares. Alicia is placid and happy. Jennie Aspar is for the present living with them, and she is now the acknowledged *fiancée* of Maurice Tyrone. He and she have alike explained their position and their engagement to her family, who have had to put up with it as they may, for they have not been consulted, but only informed. Tyrone, having resolutely and patiently grappled with his affairs in Ireland, finds that things are not so utterly hopeless as they once seemed. He is going to bring under the operation of the Landed Estates Act what remnant of valuable interest, after incumbrances, he possesses in what once were family estates, and he thinks that, what with his mother's money and the sale of all the rest, he will have a modest amount left to keep his wife and himself in a sort of genteel poverty until he can find that mysterious path which is to open out a career for him. Meanwhile he has all but quarrelled with Madame Pinel, whom he finds one day in a flood of tears over his degradation because he is going to marry a jeweller's daughter or pawnbroker's daughter or something of the kind, and she wonders that the ghosts of all the real old Tyrones don't come from their graves. Indeed, she declares that she has

herself seen Tyrone's aunt appear in the moonlight at the foot of her bed all in white, looking awful. However, the ancient spectre does not appear at the foot of Tyrone's bed, and even if she had, could never have frightened her headstrong and desperate nephew out of marrying Jennie Aspar. Tyrone becomes so angry with Johanna that she never dares to mention the subject again, but goes about the house shaking her head solemnly and looking like a martyr.

Mr. Prinker and Colonel Quentin are close friends, and Mr. Prinker is chairman of a new mining company whereof Colonel Quentin is managing director, and Colonel Quentin now appears on the board of a financiering company of which Mr. Prinker is the leading spirit. Colonel Quentin dines very often with the Prinkers. His manner to Jennie is friendly and kind, with a slight dash of the pathetic in it; but he appears to have crushed down all memories of his sudden love proposal and to have subsided into the place of an unassuming friend. Jennie likes his bearing and feels grateful to him.

Winter has come upon London, but it is winter with a premature flavour of the season about it, as if the metropolis were trying to turn night into day. For the condition of Ireland is troublesome—perhaps ominous, rather than troublesome—and a winter session has been called together to deal with the subject. The Government either have, or affect to have, positive news of Fenian schemes and plots whereof the public know nothing. The public, however, are in a condition to believe almost anything, for, after a long lull in reports and alarms of Fenianism, there has been a sudden revival of astonishing rumour and some startling evidence. Meanwhile nothing has been heard of the gallant General Macan, and Tyrone is beginning to hope he has gone back to the head-quarters near Union Square, New York. Charette is still in prison somewhere, to be tried soon. The Government officials say to all who inquire, "No foreign government, American or French, has shown any inclination to interfere on his behalf or concern itself at all about him."

The important fact, however, in which at the present we are concerned is that Tyrone and Jennie Aspar are openly engaged or acknowledged lovers. Real life has done this much for our heroine—it has found her a hero and given him to her. She ought to be almost at the highest point of human happiness. Were it only for herself she would be happy even

to ecstasy. But she has to think of her lover, and she has already learned the woman's part—to look first in the face of her lover before she knows whether or not she is to be happy. Sometimes Jennie Aspar, looking anxiously in Tyrone's face, saw it clouded.

There was much about the present position of his love-suit which did not delight Tyrone. He chafed at the terms on which he was received by the Prinkers. It humiliated him that he should be in the condition of a supplicant for the favour and the good opinion of such people. It galled him to think that he seemed as if on trial and under inspection. He thought Prinker a dull, pompous, and purse-proud old prig, and he found Alicia almost absolutely uninteresting. The dinner-parties to which he was sometimes invited were stupid and heavy, and Tyrone was often seized with a silent mood, and could not make himself agreeable there. People put down as insufferable hauteur and beggarly self-conceit the cold reserve which was only that of a sensitive nature, perplexed in the extreme. Tyrone hardly ever saw Jennie alone now, even for five minutes. It was made evident to him in every possible way, that the Prinkers wholly disapproved of his suit to Jennie, and only endured it at the last since endured it must be, as the self-immolation of a wilful, headstrong girl to a worthless and ruined young man. It was a new sensation for our young prince to find himself an unwelcome guest anywhere. Perhaps there were moments when he wished he were not quite so much in love with Jennie.

All this, however, he forgot when she was in the room—when he was near her; when he could catch now and then a glance from her eyes. Never could there be a truer and (in its way) a purer sacrifice to mere love than Tyrone made, when he endured his position with the Prinkers for the sake of Jennie. It was a good lesson in life for him. At last he had ceased to live wholly for himself. He hardly ever went to a club; he rarely dined out, He had made up his mind that when the present chapter of Irish difficulties should have passed away, and he could feel sure that his voice would no longer be needed for his country, he would resign his seat in Parliament. Only he would resign freely when the time came—he would not be driven out.

Jennie saw with falcon eye all his sacrifices and his struggles, and she adored him for them. But she sometimes won-

dered with a kind of terror whether his nature could endure this strain for her, whether he would not some time or other grow tired of it and renounce it. She could not help seeing now and then that Tyrone had a contempt for Mr. Prinker and his ways and his wealth: that he thought Aunt Granger a bore, and Mr. Granger an idiot. Aunt Granger in particular took advantage of what she knew or guessed of Tyrone's position as a possible connexion to patronize him ostentatiously, and treat him with a sort of maternal familiarity and affection which were very trying. Mrs. Granger was fond of handsome young men, and liked them all the better if they had, or had had, a dangerous reputation. She gave out in an elaborately discreet way, that she "favoured the match," that Tyrone was a great pet of hers, and that she had always known that he would sow his wild oats and come to something. In truth, all the members of the two families, except Jennie alone, were secretly proud of the attachment of Tyrone and disposed to give themselves airs about it. Even Mr. Prinker, although firmly and conscientiously opposed to the match, felt it meanwhile a proud thing to have such a suitor in the family. For in the House of Commons Tyrone even still usually associated with men to whom it never occurred to have any manner of private intimacy with Mr. Prinker.

All this Jennie saw, and it made her uncomfortable. Every trying condition of life tends to develop in women, no matter how young, that maternal, care-taking instinct which always calls upon them to throw themselves between man and his discomforts. Jennie longed to do something to shelter and relieve her lover from these petty, ignoble annoyances. When she thought of them and tried to prevent them it seemed to her as if she had become prematurely older than Tyrone, and ought to be able to protect him from such annoyances. This was a new and doubly endearing light in which to regard her brilliant hero, her magnificent ruined prince, her handsome, brave demi-god, whose love lifted up her soul. She was raised above the earth with happiness when she thought of him and how he loved her. For herself she asked nothing but that this should last for ever. She could have lived a life of pure delight on the mere thought of his love, feeding her heart on it always.

But the little annoyances under which she sometimes saw him wince gave her pain. One fortunate day he came to

Mr. Prinker's when no one was at home but Jennie, and she ran down delighted to see him; and—let the truth be spoken—Tyrone fairly took her in his arms and kissed her, and although she blushed rosy red she did not resist or remonstrate.

"My darling Jennie," said Tyrone, releasing her, "I wish I could take you in my arms and fly away with you; carry you off to some island, where there should be nobody but you and I—you and I!"

"And so do I sometimes," she answered, quite earnestly and gravely. "I wish you might."

"Suppose we run away and get married; give your people the slip, and get rid of all obstacles and delays? Will you come, Jennie?"

"I will come if you ask me; any moment you like." She turned her eyes fully on his, and their expression was serious and even sad.

"Would you really do this?" Tyrone asked, more earnestly. "Would you come away with me now—this day—and trust to me; and leave all, and quarrel with your family, and be my wife?"

"I would, indeed. I would go upstairs this moment and put on my bonnet, and go with you to the end of the world, if you asked me."

Tyrone stood up and looked at her with eyes that lighted with surprise and love.

"Good God!" he said, "you don't know the temptation you put in my way! Jennie, as I stand here I am wild with longing to take you at your word and carry you off this moment."

"Take me at my word," said Jennie, "if you will."

"You would not be afraid to trust yourself to me?" he asked, laying one hand gently upon her shoulder and looking down at her tenderly.

"Afraid to trust myself to you? What could I be afraid of? I am sure you care a great deal more for me than I do for myself." It did not even occur to our heroine to think that there could be fear for her purity and her honour in the care of the man who loved her. She never bestowed a thought on the subject. She was far too confiding and too pure. In her whole nature was no drop of suspicion of the perfect honour of her lover.

As she spoke she put her hand gently, frankly, into his. Tyrone raised it to his lips, then dropped it and turned away

for an instant, not without a sigh. At such a moment every generous man feels a pang to think that he never can in life again have a purity fit to match with that of such a woman.

"This, I suppose," he said, speaking to himself rather than to her, "is the feeling which makes people believe in the lost Paradise!" He thought of the foolish, evanescent, half-corrupting pleasures and excitements to which so much of his youth and his early manhood had been given. A whole brood of sullied memories swept over him in an instant, and then he looked again at the pure face of the girl who loved and trusted him, and he could have knelt to her and begged to be forgiven, because he had not always been worthy of her.

"Well, Jennie," he said, "I'll not take you at your word. I'll not make myself happy in that way. I sometimes doubt if the best thing I could do for your happiness and your life would not be to go away this moment and never see you again."

"Oh!" She caught his hand instinctively as if he were actually about to leave her.

"Don't be afraid; I'm not going to leave you. I am not enough of a hero even if it ought to be done, but I'll not carry you away, Jennie, just yet. We must wait. But now tell me something. Come, sit here on this sofa near me. But I'll not come too near, for if I did I should want to kiss you. Tell me one thing; why have you changed so suddenly in all this?"

"Changed in what, Mr. Tyrone?"

"Don't call me Mr. Tyrone. Call me Maurice, or call me Tyrone, the name I love best. Well, now for a full explanation. Only the other day you were all wisdom and caution. Now you are ready to run away to Gretna Green, if there be any such place, or anywhere. Why is this change? You don't do anything out of mere caprice. Why so cautious then and so incautious now?"

"I was only cautious for you, never for myself. What do I care about myself, so long as I have you?"

"But why not in the same mood still? Come, Jennie, let me see your heart?"

"You may see it all, my dearest—I mean Mr. Tyrone. Well then, Tyrone—dearest, dearest Tyrone! Oh, why should I not call you my dearest when you are so? I have only changed because I think you are not happy, and I think I ought to do something to give you happiness. No, don't

begin to tell me that you are, for I can see things, and I know you are tired of all this, and you don't care for my people, Tyrone."

He was about to interpose with some reassuring words, but she stopped him.

"Don't stop me; let me speak. You despise them in your heart, all their little meannesses and their ways, and you think them beneath you, and I don't wonder, for they *are* beneath you. I used to laugh at Aunt Lucy, and think her ways mean and ridiculous. How could you help feeling a contempt for them? But I feel pained for you, and for them, and for *me*. Do you remember how pert and rude I was to you that first day I ever saw you, because I thought you despised them and us? Ah, what a child I was then, and I feel such a grave woman now! Well now, you understand me, I know. I think you are ashamed of these people, who are *my* people, and I have brought you into all this, and I see that you are not happy. And so if anything I could do would give you pleasure, I would do it and think it right to do. Wise or not I would do it if you wished."

Here Jennie's voice gave way and her eyes filled with tears. Tyrone put his arm round her and drew her to him, and soothed her with a thousand blandishments, and with sincere assurances that her love was worth all the world to him and that she was the queen of his universe. He earnestly pleaded to be forgiven if he had ever, by any unfortunate impatience of manner, showed that he failed in respect for her people ("I don't want you to respect them—how could you respect Aunt Lucy, except because she is good-natured and all that?" broke in Jennie, with some of her old impetuosity), and he consoled and encouraged her, and talked away her fears. He went away resolving that he would take good care never again to show impatience or contempt for any of Jennie's people, and thinking more than ever how dear and pure and good she was, and how bright a time it would be when he could take her to himself altogether. Before he left her he did, too, make some plea about the comfort of sometimes seeing her alone; and Jennie declared that, let who would object, she would see him alone and walk with him whenever he wished. Perhaps this was the most prudent thing an imprudent and innocent girl ever did, for it threw Tyrone upon his honour and self-control to shield her from all blame or doubt; and he resolved that he would never ask her to

meet him or receive him alone; that if they ever did have a precious and delightful quarter of an hour together it must even be the work of blameless chance.

Another little discomfort in the way of the lovers arose from the frequent visits of Colonel Quentin, who had succeeded in making himself a constant guest with the Prinkers and the Grangers alike.

"I wish you would not let that fellow come near you," Tyrone said to Jennie, one evening when there was a large party in her sister's drawing-room and he had a chance of speaking to her. "I don't like him, Jennie, and I hate to see him near you."

"What can I do?" she asked. "He comes here to Alicia and Mr. Prinker. They like him."

"Let them like him, if they will; there is something about him I distrust and don't like. Take my word for it, Jennie, he is a low and worthless fellow. I have an instinctive detestation of him. When he speaks to you I feel inclined to kick him out of the room."

"He was very kind," said Jennie, simply, "when poor papa died. He is a plain, unaffected sort of person."

"Unaffected! The fellow is as full of affectation as a schoolgirl."

"He is a great friend of Mrs. Lorn," said Jennie, not without the least possible tinge of harmless malice.

"I don't know. Mrs. Lorn used to seem afraid of him, and I don't think she has much sense in any case. Then the idea of the fellow thinking you would marry him. Absurd! After that he ought to have had the sense to keep away."

"You are not angry?" Jennie asked, pleadingly. "I wouldn't annoy you for a thousand such, but what can I do? I can't be uncivil; there is no reason. But, if you like, I will never speak to him again, Tyrone. I will do anything you like. How can a poor girl be more submissive? They used to call me wilful and headstrong——"

"I am afraid they call you so still," said Tyrone, smiling, "when you wont take advice and renounce *me*. No, Jennie; do as you will. I am a fool, and an ungrateful one, too, to distress you about anything. Be as civil to Colonel Quentin as you think right. If he was kind to you, that gives him a claim on me; and I don't think I ought to blame him if he fell in love with you."

"Oh, but he didn't! I am sure he didn't! It was some impulse of good nature."

"Well, let us put all that aside. He couldn't help himself, I suppose; and see, Jennie, I'll go and speak to him and be as cordial as I can presently, for *your* sake."

So Tyrone did presently cross the room and talk to Quentin with grand civility, which perhaps in his secret heart our self-conceited young prince considered an immense act of condescension, quite enough to have effaced every unpleasant memory from the breast of the American. Indeed, under the conviction that he was doing a kind thing for Quentin, Mr. Tyrone began to feel positively genial and friendly towards him. It always softened Tyrone's heart to have a chance of doing a kindness to anybody. His bitterest enemy might have won him over by giving him a chance of doing that enemy a good turn.

Colonel Quentin had half a dozen good reasons for disliking Tyrone, one of the foremost of which was that his whole mind was set on injuring him, and he wanted a full and satisfactory justification. Another reason, and a strong one, was his uneasy conviction that Tyrone did not consider him a gentleman. Tyrone, he felt satisfied, could know nothing of his origin; but yet Quentin believed that he was looked down upon, and he writhed under the thought. Quentin was sensitive and sore all over on this point; it was the one chief weakness in a character that had otherwise no small amount of strength.

He had strength enough not to show any of his feelings to Tyrone, and Jennie saw with some pleasure that they talked together in apparently a very friendly way. But Tyrone's little outburst of anger impressed her rather painfully. It brought with it a new and vague sense of alarm. It suggested something else to be thought of and guarded against. The girl sometimes wondered to herself what was becoming of the hot and petulant temper that used to distress her friends and herself. It was all absorbed, apparently, in the strength of her love—the love whereof she was always taking thought, and which, even while it most excited her anxiety, made her supreme joy in life, and left her neither time nor mood for petty anger and small gladnesses.

Tyrone walked part of his way home that night in company with Colonel Quentin. As they were about to separate near the corner of Clarges Street, Quentin asked carelessly—

"Have you heard lately from our friend Macan?"

"I have not heard anything of Mr. Macan." (If Quentin had not used the words "our friend" Tyrone would have spoken of "General" Macan, and willingly accorded to the Fenian, whom he rather liked, his coveted military honours. But the words "our friend" grated on his ears.) "There was no reason why he should write to me."

"Indeed! I thought you were in communication. But Macan is such a negligent fellow; he is good for nothing until action of some kind begins."

Tyrone smoked his cigar and remained rigidly silent.

"You have heard, of course, of General Charette's escape?" asked Quentin.

"No. Has he escaped?"

"Oh yes; he is at large. I saw the telegram just now."

"Can it be true? Where did he escape from?"

"I don't quite remember. Some one of your local prisons. I dare say he bribed the turnkey or something of the kind. Charette's a cool, clever fellow, with courage and stratagem enough for anything."

"And this is certain?" Tyrone asked, to whom it seemed a grave piece of news, considering the effect it was likely to have on Fenianism, which he had hoped was dying out.

"Perfectly certain. He is probably with Macan by this time. We shall hear news of them before long, depend upon it."

"I wish you foreigners would leave Ireland to herself," said Tyrone, bitterly. "You can't help her, Colonel Quentin. The best thing you can do is to let her alone. The unsought services of a cosmopolitan desperado like this man Charette are the heaviest curse ever inflicted upon her. This was all we wanted to complete our ruin."

He tossed his cigar-end impatiently away and turned up Clarges Street in a somewhat petulant mood, and perhaps a little ashamed of his own petulance. But he really anticipated only the worst results for Ireland from the escape of Charette.

"If they had but let the fellow go," Tyrone said to himself, meaning by "they" the English Government; "if they had only sent him away or let him go with utter indifference it might have done some good. But if this story of his escape be true it is the very thing which, above all others, will delight the Munster and Connaught peasantry, just the

blending of craft and daring which they exult in; and the fellow will be a hero and a leader, a chief to trust and believe in. I feel strongly tempted to revive the old ridiculous quarrel, accept his challenge again, and do my best to blow his brains out."

With which charitable and Christianlike expression of regret, Tyrone put his latchkey into his door and opened it.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Tyrone was almost always the latest arrival in Madame Pinel's house. A little tongue of flame was left burning in the gas-lamp in the hall, and another in the candelabrum upheld by a tall lady in imitation bronze who stood in the lobby outside his sitting-room door. Beside the bronze lady was a small table whereon stood a taper, which Tyrone could light from the bronze lady's candelabrum, and thus, if he felt inclined, set the gas in his sitting-room burning.

This night Tyrone went carelessly up the stairs, and when he came to the lobby table was a little surprised to find that the taper was not there. The scent of cigar-smoke, too, seemed to fill the place, an unusual thing in his absence, for he was the only smoker under the roof. He opened the door of his sitting-room. The gas was lighted, and a man was reclining on the sofa and smoking a cigar. The moment Tyrone entered the man sprang up and advanced to meet him with a profound bow. It was Charette.

"I have to ask a thousand pardons of Mr. Tyrone," said the General, "for an intrusion so strange; but I am a fugitive and an outlaw, and I ask for shelter on the threshold of my enemy. I stand like Coriolanus at the gate of Aufidius. Mr. Tyrone, I am your personal enemy. I am in your power. Surrender me, if you will, to British law."

"May I ask, General Charette," said Tyrone, who had now recovered his composure, "how you have come to do me the honour of occupying my rooms in my absence?"

"That is all simple. I escape from the prison—matters not how—I fly to London, the largest place, the most easy of refuge, in safety. I have no friends here but those who are in danger like myself. Naturally I think of an enemy who is a man of honour. I come to your door; I tell madame the *concièrge* that I desire to wait for you; she allows me. That

is all. Mr. Tyrone, we are enemies. We have yet a quarrel to fight out, which must be fought. Meantime I ask for shelter from you."

Tyrone felt an unspeakable blending of dislike and curiosity as he looked at Charette. The rather flat nose, the receding forehead, the broad, pale-blue flashing eye, the wolf-like expression in the mouth, with its lips that seemed to fold back as he spoke, the red hair and moustache, the exaggeration of tone and gesture, all made up a personage who might seem a buffoon if he were not so much of a brigand. The story of the man's life came back upon Tyrone; of his ingrained passion for conspiracy and delight in revolt, his insatiable thirst for bloodshed, his almost inconceivable eccentricities as a politician, and the utter recklessness with which he exposed his own life to every danger; and Tyrone could not help feeling a certain interest blended with his surprise and displeasure.

"I don't know, General Charette," he said, slowly, "why you should expect safety here. You must have been seen entering this door, and I fear I am one of the suspected myself, although how innocently you know perfectly well. You know that I am entirely opposed to all your schemes, that I have no sympathy with what you call the Revolution, and that I think the intrusion of your continental revolutionists is a bitter curse to Ireland. Why do you ask *me* to shelter you?"

"Because you are an Irish gentleman—they tell me of the blood of Irish princes—and, as I have said, because you are my enemy! I only ask you to allow me to stay here until the early train for Paris to-morrow morning; to permit me so far to disguise myself here as I can, and to designate the way, when I am ready, to the nearest voiture—cab. Then I am gone, and that is all. But if you wish to surrender me to the police you can. Our quarrel, Mr. Tyrone, will not be embittered by your betraying me nor mitigated by your giving me your shelter. I appeal to you as a man of honour to his enemy."

Then Charette fell back to the chimneypiece, leaned against it, inflated his chest, and resumed his cigar. He was now Coriolanus complete. The moment was delightful to him. Life was to Charette always a grand theatric spectacle, in which he had the happy privilege of at once playing the hero and contemplating his own performance. Charette had ever

and over again prepared his dying speeches and rehearsed his dying attitudes. Death, in any form, could hardly take him unawares. He was ready with something fine to say if a bullet should strike him in the breast, or he should be taken out for execution, or should expire wounded on a hospital bed with the Sister of Charity weeping beside him. The Revolution—here, there, anywhere—was a stage for him. Perhaps the one only time when Fortune took him quite unexpectedly was when Tyrone's clenched hand struck him between the eyes. He had not studied anything appropriate and fine for a hero to say on being knocked down. Half bravo, half mountebank, he had at least the bloodthirsty courage of a Fra Diavolo as well as the careless, supple immorality of a Paillasse. To do him justice, he would, were he in Tyrone's place, have sheltered his worst enemy, were it at the risk of his own life. To do him justice, too, he would have thought it his fair privilege and right to seduce the wife of his dearest friend while sheltering, at that friend's utter risk, beneath his roof.

Tyrone walked impatiently up and down his room.

"This is too much," he thought to himself. "What can I do with this confounded fellow? I ought to hand him over to the police at once, but I can't do so. This is what comes of not having been born a British churchwarden! Confound it all! I detest this man as much as any St. Pancras churchwarden could do, but I can't give him up. It would be something quite new in the history of the house of Tyrone if the head of the family—head and body and all now—were to play the part of a British policeman. Why am I an anachronism?"

He began, however, to see a certain humour in the whole adventure and to be amused by it.

General Charette kept his attitude and waited without a word or movement. His eyes were deficient in eyelashes and had an odd way of blinking, which gave somehow an additional expression of ferocious recklessness to them.

Tyrone stopped at last.

"General Charette," he said, "I can't refuse you shelter. I tell you frankly I almost wish I could. But if I help you to escape—and remember such an act will destroy me in public opinion here—will you promise to give up all plots and schemes for the benefit of unfortunate Ireland—all schemes of revolution?"

"I cannot accept shelter on conditions," said Charette, waving proudly the hand which held his cigar. "I think I

remember me of Mr. Tyrone once refusing safety under conditions. It may be that the John Bull Government itself would have let me off were I content to promise. No, Mr. Tyrone, I have consecrated my life to the cause of the oppressed nationalities. Ireland, your country, is oppressed. She has but to call on me—lo, I am there!"

"Will you promise," Tyrone asked, with a smile which he could not repress, "to wait until she does call on you?"

"I can promise nothing, Mr. Tyrone. Man gives not what is not his own. My life is devoted to the cause of liberty. I am in your power. I have no claim on you, except the claim of revenge for a sanglant insult. I have obtruded myself on you. You can surrender me. That will only affect *you*. But to make a condition; ah, well that, see you, would affect *me*. Mr. Tyrone—Jamais!"

"Well," said Tyrone, "you have trusted to me, and whatever comes of it I cannot betray you. Will you then do me the favour to occupy my bedroom, General Charette? I will sleep here on the sofa."

"No, not so," the General replied, with a polite bow. "I, with your permission, will occupy the sofa; it's luxurious accommodation for one who has spent his boyhood and his manhood, as I have, in the great and the little war. Pardon; do not urge me, it would but distress me. I must not intrude on your kindness too far. We are enemies, Mr. Tyrone, and must be enemies until the stain of a night be washed away. But for the moment you are only my too courteous host, and I am your guest profoundly obliged."

Tyrone then offered his singular guest wine, brandy—anything. But Charette was a water-drinker, and seldom ate anything unless compelled by actual hunger. His cigar, he said, was his only luxury. So Tyrone courteously bade him good-night, to which Charette replied by a profound bow, and then the perplexed host left his serene and self-contained guest.

Tyrone went into his bedroom, but he felt little inclination for sleep. The nearness of Charette seemed to oppress him, and he could hear that Charette was wide awake, for the regular puffing of the cigar went on as steadily as the throbbing of a steam-engine. Tyrone sat in an arm-chair and gave himself up to thought about his prospects, his life, the condition of his country, about Jennie and his love for her. He fell into an uneasy sleep at last, and he dreamed that Colonel Quentin was in the next room with Charette, and

that both were plotting some assassin scheme. He saw the room and Charette and Quentin so plainly—the two men with their heads together, and Quentin's black eyes earnestly gazing into Charette's blinking, pale blue, hyena eyes—that when he awoke with a start he felt certain Quentin was close at hand. There was no sound now from Charette, and Tyrone could not resist the temptation to rise and go to the door of the room and look in. The door was open; the lamps were burning; the fire was out. Charette was not asleep; he was seated at the centre-table with a military map spread out before him, in the study of which he was wholly absorbed. The professional revolutionist was studying his part. Tyrone went back to his room and presently fell into a deep sleep. When he woke, cold and shivering, he started up and looked at his watch. It was long past the hour when Charette ought to have gone. He hurried into the drawing-room. The lights were out; the cold wintry sun was stealing in. Nobody was there. Tyrone might for a moment have fancied that the whole adventure was a dream, but that the cigar-ashes were strewn in little heaps over the table. On the chimney-piece there was a card set conspicuously up. Tyrone took it up; it contained a few lines of French written in a neat, woman-like hand.

"Thousand thanks. Another obligation to be fulfilled! One of enmity, one of gratitude! I have not disturbed you; it was not necessary. I have taken the liberty to help myself a little to the means of disguise, and shall be safe. Not adieu, but au revoir!"

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

The news of the escape of Charette sent through London a shock like that of an explosion. At this time the alarm of Fenianism was at its height. The movement, which at first people either discredited or laughed at, was now swelled up by natural exaggeration to the dimensions of a monstrous revolutionary prodigy. Some terrible facts had made its existence manifest. Blood had been shed in more than one English town. In London itself a horrible crime, almost as remarkable for its stupidity as for its wickedness, had made society stand aghast. The undoubted presence and co-operation of men like Charette, reeking from the smoke of cosmo-

politan and social revolution, and the fact that England rather than Ireland seemed to be selected as the theatre of the performances, apparently warranted the appalling belief that Fenianism was a conspiracy against all social order—a vast and secret combination of brigands and assassins. No fear is so consuming and so contagious as that of assassination by conspiracy. The average Englishman suddenly woke up to the knowledge of the undoubted fact that in the midst of English cities there were desperate crimes to testify to the existence and the presence of that Fenianism which, if he had previously heard of it at all, he had only regarded as some ridiculous freak of harmless Irish folly. What wonder if he now was ready to believe any story of the dimensions, the deeds, the purposes of Fenianism? What wonder that when his neighbour's chimney caught fire, he started up in terror, believing that he was about to witness some awful deed of Fenian incendiarism? The passengers in an omnibus on the south side of London were thrown into such an alarm that they flung themselves pell-mell into the road one evening, because in the dusk a man who hailed the omnibus, and was getting in, had a basketful of bottles in his hand, and spoke with an Irish accent.

Justice, however, ought to be rendered to the singular fairness and solidity of the English population. For days and days a perfect panic prevailed. The Fenians were objects of unmitigated horror. They were believed to be capable of any craft and crime. Some people saw Fenians and heard explosions everywhere. Yet it does not appear that even in the poorest and most ignorant quarters, any single person was molested or injured on the assumption that he was a Fenian. On the day when the panic might be said to have reached its height, a Fenian prisoner who was supposed, although probably without reason, to have been an accomplice in the worst and wildest of all the outrages, was brought up at one of the London police-courts for examination. A great crowd were gathered round the door. There were in the crowd a few Irishmen, who, as the prisoner passed in, had the temerity to greet him with a cheer. The bulk of the crowd met this untimely demonstration with no more vehement protest than a hiss. No attempt was made to harm one of the heedless sympathizers.

Still this self-restraint was a tribute to law and fair-play; by no means a mark of any absence of hatred and passion.

Of course it would have been idle to suppose that the average Londoner, to whom the whole existence of the Fenian conspiracy had come with the shock of absolute surprise, could distinguish between the rabble of assassins who hung on to the conspiracy, and men like Charette or Macan. The latter was a brave, reckless, ignorant Irishman, animated chiefly by what he honestly believed to be a patriotic duty, but absolutely incapable of any cruel and cowardly deed. Charette was bloodthirsty enough in the way of revolutionary fighting; but assassination was a thing as impossible to his nature as docile loyalty would have been. But the London public could not be expected to see all these differences. The word "Fenian" simply in their eyes meant incendiary and murderer. The newspapers rather heated than tempered the popular alarm and passion, for they competed with each other every day in the utterance of mere invective and denunciation of Fenianism in general, mixing it all up in one hideous hash of a great criminalty.

Now this was the state of public feeling when the news came out that General Charette, who was supposed to be locked up safely in one of the provincial prisons, had made his escape. The escape had been managed with singular audacity and cunning. The event for the moment almost completely shattered public confidence. People insisted that among the very officials in our gaols there must be Fenians who were there for the set purpose of enabling their fellow-conspirators and criminals to escape.

The day after that on which Tyrone woke and found Charette gone, saw an exciting scene in the House of Commons. Some question of public interest was coming on, which in itself would have filled the galleries. But besides this the notice paper contained a string of questions to be put to the Government on the subject of Charette's escape, and the nature of the Fenian conspiracy, and the steps necessary to repress it. One question was a little peculiar. A Tory member proposed to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he was in a position to confirm or deny a report which had found its way into some of the public journals, and which alleged that the person called General Charette had been aided in his escape by a member of that House. This question was founded on a paragraph in an evening journal already mentioned, which gently expressed a hope that the earliest possible denial would be given to the common rumour that a

member of Parliament had assisted in the escape of the notorious Fenian, General Charette.

Tyrone saw the paragraph, and it amazed him. He did not care about the charge against himself, as it obviously was, and he had even made up his mind that as soon as he knew of Charette's safety, he would publicly avow and explain his own small and almost involuntary part in the escape of the desperado, who was his personal and implacable enemy. But he could not understand how anything of the matter came to be known so soon. Somewhere or other it seemed that there must be treachery; and revolving in his mind every possible and even impossible explanation, he could only think of one person to whom any suspicion whatever could attach in his mind. Even that thought he put away as unworthy; and he felt a little ashamed that personal prejudice and dislike should master him so far as to allow even a passing thought of the kind to arise.

Mr. Prinker had secured places for his wife and Jennie in the Ladies' Gallery for that night—secured them days before, without any reference to the questions about Fenianism. He came home that day to luncheon at three; the ladies were to be in their places in the House at half-past four; and he brought the notice-paper with him. He showed the one significant question to Alicia: and he and she looked at each other, and then gave sidelong glances at Jennie. Our heroine knew perfectly well that something was up which concerned her. She had seen many of those sidelong glances of late, and they tried her temper terribly. Now, however, she resolved to keep her temper and her dignity, and not ask any question, or show any curiosity.

"I think, my dear, your sister had better not go," said Mr. Prinker, at last, looking solemnly at Alicia.

Alicia only said, "Oh, Jennie!" and looked sad, awful, unutterable things.

"Has anything happened?" asked Jennie, turning pale and forgetting all about her dignity in a quick and shuddering alarm. She thought of some sudden death, some dreadful news.

Alicia looked at her husband.

"You had better let her see it, my dear," he said, with the air of one who would add, "She has brought it on herself. Her blood be on her own head."

Alicia, who was profoundly grieved for Jennie, and did not

herself quite understand what the whole thing was about, handed Jennie the notice-paper, pointing to the particular place.

Jennie took it with trembling hand and read several wrong questions up and down, here and there, and looked up at last in utter wonder and bewilderment.

"What is it?" she asked. "I don't understand all this stuff. Do, please, tell me. Is it a conundrum? What is it, Mr. Prinker?"

"That question, my dear," Mr. Prinker replied, with an awful gentleness and forbearance which plainly meant to say, "I will not crush you with reproaches, however well deserved."

Jennie read the question over and over again, but its phrases and formalities rather puzzled her, and she could only dimly guess from Mr. Prinker's manner that it must have some relation to Tyrone. However, it was clear enough that no dreadful calamity had happened, but only that there was some charge to be made against Tyrone. This did not frighten her; it only threw her into the coolness of the defensive.

"I don't think I understand all this," she said; "do, please, explain it. I don't know anything about General Charette and Mr. Attorney-General; what is it all, Alicia?"

"Oh, my dear!" Alicia shrugged her shoulders, looked sad and sympathetic, but did not explain. In fact she could not.

"You see," said Mr. Prinker, slowly, "this is evidently aimed at Mr. Tyrone—evidently; the paper almost says so—there can be no other member of the House of Commons to whom such a thing could apply. Helping that Fenian scoundrel to escape! Oh!" and Mr. Prinker waved his hand, to signify that the guilt and shame of the thing went quite beyond words.

"Perhaps it's not true," Alicia mildly pleaded. "The papers say such odd things sometimes. Perhaps it's not true, dear."

"Perhaps not," said Jennie, very composedly; "if there was anything wrong in it, you may say it certainly is not true, Alicia. Mr. Tyrone does nothing that is wrong. I really don't know whether helping this man to escape was wrong or right; but if it was wrong then you may be quite certain Mr. Tyrone never did it. So I think we need not alarm or

distress ourselves. I should like to go all the more now, Mr. Prinker, if you please—if you have no objection."

Our Jennie was, as we know, a young woman far from faultless; when her voice assumed a certain decided tone, weaker people did not generally care to argue a point with her. They found they got on better by giving way. Mr. Prinker did not dispute this point; he only thought how well he was suited in Alicia, and how lucky he was not to have thought of marrying Jennie. Yet with her kindling eyes, her cheeks just faintly tinged with colour, her white, clear forehead, her compressed red lips, and her bosom panting with kept-down emotion, Jennie was at that very moment as charming an embodiment of generous, emotional, and noble girlhood as one could have seen—not to be exchanged by any man with heart and senses for the purest specimen of the docile, dull, and colourless housewife.

The House of Commons was very full. Jennie had begun to understand its ways now pretty well. She looked eagerly towards the place where her hero usually sat, and saw that he was already there. If Jennie saw Tyrone half-a-dozen times in the day her heart always beat quickly and a faint mist dimmed her eyes for a moment each time when her glance first rested on him. How handsome he looked, and calm and even nonchalant. His eyes many times went up towards the gilded bars behind which she sat, and she knew he was looking for her, although he could not see her. She felt delighted and proud. Think of his looking for her at such a moment. It was like a hero just going into battle giving his last thought to his love. Jennie was a sadly unpatriotic little English girl. Had Tyrone really favoured the Fenian conspirators it would hardly have made much difference to her; she would probably have thought that they must be in the right when Tyrone approved of them.

A great deal of buzzing and murmuring talk went on below, of which Jennie could make out nothing. She understood enough now of the business of the House to know that when a member rose with a printed paper in his hand and muttered a few words, or made dumb show, that was an honourable gentleman putting a question to the ministers. She also knew that when somebody got up from the ministerial benches and whispered something, and made a few awkward gestures, that was a right honourable gentleman, a member of her Majesty's Government, giving a reply; moreover,

she was well aware that when some really interesting question was to be put and answered, there would be cries of "Order!" and then a profound silence, and some sharp request to "Speak up!" if the orator failed to make his voice heard.

Now for it! A buzz, a hush, then several cries of "Order!" An intense eagerness everywhere, and then a member rose from the Opposition benches, and in a vigorous tone and with lungs that cheerily suggested the hunting-field, begged to ask the Attorney-General if he was in a position to inform the House whether there was any truth in the report, that the person called General Charette had been assisted in his escape by a member of that House. Loud cries of "Hear! hear!" followed the question.

Jennie looked to where Tyrone sat. He seemed quite composed and cool. She almost wished he had looked a little more angry at the charge.

The Attorney-General arose, and drily replied that Her Majesty's Government had no information whatever on the subject. This was so disappointing and such an anti-climax to all expectation that some frivolous members actually laughed.

Is that all? Is the incident all over? No; for in a moment Tyrone rose, and there were at once loud cries of "Hear! hear!" and "Order! order!" and calls for silence. Everybody knew that he was the member pointed out, and almost everybody supposed that he was about to deny the charge. Therefore when he began by asking the permission of the House to say a few words of personal explanation there were renewed cries of "Hear! hear!" The House of Commons has generally a good deal of the *esprit de corps*, and is glad when any of its members can clear himself of any personal charge.

"I assume," Tyrone said, amid a breathless silence—every syllable he spoke in his clear strong voice piercing into Jennie's very heart—"I assume that the question of the honourable member opposite is levelled at me, and I hasten to give it that answer which Her Majesty's Government were naturally unable to give. But as I wish to add a few words of explanation I will put myself in order by moving the adjournment of the House." (Jennie was now adept enough in the intricacies of parliamentary forms to know that on such an occasion as the present, when a member desired to do some-

thing more than put a mere question or give a dry answer, he obtained the right to make a speech by moving, *pro formâ*, the adjournment of the House. Her heart beat more wildly than ever, for now she knew that Tyrone had no simple denial to offer. The same impression ran with a thrill through the House.) "Let me begin by a direct answer to the question. I did give shelter for a few hours to the escaped prisoner, General Charette!"

There was a moment's breathless pause, and then a roar of anger broke from almost all parts of the House. Tyrone endeavoured to go on with his explanation, but in truth he had made a fatal mistake. He wished now to express once more, and with emphasis, his utter disapproval of Charette's scheme, and even of Charette's personal career, and to explain under what unexpected conditions it was put upon him either to shelter the fugitive or to act the part of a police-constable, and hand him over to justice. But he ought to have begun with that explanation, and thus disposed the House to judge at once justly and leniently of his offence. He might then have been allowed to say that it was his purpose to have frankly laid bare to the Government his part in the whole transaction; but that when he saw the notice of a question to be asked in Parliament he deemed it more respectful to the House of Commons to offer his explanation there. Tyrone, as we know, had a general respect for the House, and believed in its general fairness and good spirit. But on this occasion, as on many others, a feeling of perhaps mistaken chivalry possessed him, and made him believe that it would be unmanly to begin with an excuse. The frank avowal of the fact, plain and square first, he thought, and the explanation afterwards.

But it was now too late. The temper of the House was roused beyond all control. Tyrone's avowal seemed an insult and a defiance flung in the face of Parliament. The horror of Fenianism was rabid. The House roared at Tyrone, and endeavoured to drown his voice. He kept his place calm and firm, and in every interval of the storm of anger he endeavoured to send the clear tones of his voice ringing through the House. But no assembly in the world is so tumultuous as the House of Commons when once it breaks fairly loose. A great number of passionate young loyalists had determined that Tyrone should not be heard. "He shan't be heard—no Fenian shall be heard here!" was yelled by a whole chorus

of furious voices. If Jennie had had time for such thoughts, she would have been immensely amused at the grotesque spectacle of four or five hundred grown men all jumping up, bawling and gesticulating together. Tyrone kept his place, the only calm and motionless figure erect in that tumultuous assembly. There were a few other figures indeed equally calm, but not erect. The Speaker sat in his chair silent and composed as a graven image. The principal members of the Government and two or three of the foremost leaders of the Opposition threw themselves back in their seats, and awaited the end without the slightest expression of emotion, as if it were all only a form which had to be got through somehow, and called for no observation. All the other figures were wild with incessant motion and sound. Whenever the tempest of yelling died away for a moment, and a word from Tyrone made itself heard, the mere sound lent new energy to the storm, and a perfect hurricane of roaring swept over the House. A few Irish members roared for a hearing for Tyrone, but they might as well have roared against him, for their voices only swelled the common chorus. Tyrone was not popular among the Irish members; some thought he went much too far, others thought he did not go half far enough; many believed him to be at least a Fenian sympathiser and condemned him accordingly; others insisted that he was only looking for a place under Government. Some steady old fellows thought him wild and dissipated, others complained of his self-conceit, and thought he gave himself airs. There was little cordiality in the support which he got now from his countrymen; such as it was, it was given to his nationality rather than to himself.

Jennie could not make out a word in all the din—there was in fact nothing to make out; it was only anger and noise—five hundred men against one. The House of Commons does not look dignified on such occasions, even when its anger is righteous. The one man has always this advantage over the five hundred, that he can maintain the dignity of isolation and composure, and seems to be unmanfully set upon.

How odd the faces looked! Strange—these bellowing gesticulating men, who looked like maniacs broken loose, are gentlemen, fathers of families, scholars, men of rank, Belgravian swells, aristocrats. There is the pink of courtesy and chivalry, the Hon. Colonel Maidstone, so famed in the Crimea,

so delightful at a Richmond strawberry breakfast, he is bawling like a cabman, and his face is turning the colour of a purple grape. That fat florid man—indeed they are all florid now—who is bursting out of his waistcoat—his suspenders can be seen distinctly as he half rises and shakes his fist—that is a steady City magnate, whose daughters, elderly young women already, are in the Ladies' Gallery, and look down on their bellowing and jumping papa. That strong, clear, well-sustained shriek, which the most accomplished *gamin* of Seven Dials would admit to be a feat for his envy, is the proud achievement of the heir to a dukedom. The hoarse noise which issues from yonder stout, short, grey-whiskered personage, who looks stolidly before him, and bawls unmoving, is a voice that has shouted a word of command through many ocean tempests and some close battles on the sea. That tall person yonder with the long, fair whiskers, who stamps and leaps like a gigantic *punchinello*, holds high office in Her Majesty's household, and is an authority on Court etiquette. Not one of these men would individually and singly do a rude or offensive thing. Together they form a pell-mell mass of vociferous maniacs. Men are howling in furious demonstration of rage let loose who would scorn to show the slightest emotion if ordered to lead a forlorn hope. That great railway man, who now looks as if he ought to be in a padded cell, would preserve a smooth aspect and a complacent smile if some news were announced to him which threatened the wreck of his dearest schemes and the ruin of his fortune.

Jennie took in the whole field of sight, her chief emotion being simple anger at the men who tried to shout down her hero, but with some room left in her breast for wonder that rational creatures could make such an exhibition of themselves. She saw Captain Cadsby flourishing his gloves wildly, and saw that his jaws were distended to their utmost limits to let out the sound. Fixing this one little face, and framing it separately from out the crowd, it did not look manly or fascinating. Jennie thought Mr. Prinker looked better even, for although he too was apparently joining in the uproar, he did not distend his features, and he kept his hands down. Of course she thought Tyrone looked splendid and noble. He still stood there, tall, graceful, self-possessed, enjoying, in an artistic point of view, all the immense advantages of his lonely, self-reliant, hopeless position. He had no

need to distend his features or to exert himself. No explanation could be heard above that storm. He could only wait. At last it became evident that waiting was in vain, and was only undignified. Seizing an instant of comparative lull, he sent the words through the benches and galleries—"The House has refused to hear my explanation—I ask the public to judge between it and me!" And then with these words, heard here and lost there, he sat down amid a roar of wild and overwhelming triumph. Then, while the shout of the victorious five hundred was still at its height, Tyrone rose from his place, bowed to the Speaker, and walked slowly out of the House.

The whole scene then grew misty in Jennie's eyes, and she whispered to her sister, "Alicia dear, I should like to go home." Alicia good-naturedly pressed her hand. Mr. Prinker presently came and hurried them to the carriage through all manner of devious corridors and small passages. He put them into the carriage and returned to the House. He was fussy and flurried, and hardly spoke. Jennie remained silent nearly all the way; only once she broke out with the ejaculation—

"What cowards men are!"

"Cowards, dear?" Alicia echoed.

"Yes; cowards, cowards! A whole mob of them against one!"

"I suppose we must make allowance," Mr. Prinker insinuated. "What a pity it was that Mr. Tyrone should have acted so! I wonder why he did it?"

"Did what?"

"Helped that dreadful man to escape."

"Mr. Tyrone only does what is right. They could not understand a nature like his, those cowards who shouted at him," said Jennie, imperatively and decisively.

Alicia only sighed. She was sorry for Jennie, and saw terrible storms ahead. She expected that Mr. Prinker would want to do wise and awful things to-morrow. But it would be of no use, she thought, attempting to remonstrate with Jennie. "I can't do anything," Alicia said to herself; "Mr. Prinker and she must really settle it between them. Oh, what a pity she ever saw him." The "him" in this sentence meant Tyrone. Alicia had never herself seen anything much in Tyrone. He was very handsome, and had a good figure, and all that; and Aunt Granger particularly

admired his legs; but Alicia did not care much about legs, and she never quite understood Tyrone's manner, or exactly followed what he was talking about.

It was still early in the evening. Mr. Prinker and Colonel Quentin came to dinner at eight. Jennie dressed herself as becomingly as she could, and came to dinner, proud and half defiant, determined to show no emotion of any kind. Not one word was said about the scene in the House. When Alicia and Jennie left the dining-room, Jennie went to her harp and tried to play. The only notes she could sound, were those of that wild, sweet passionate air which she had first played to Tyrone. She could not bear it; and at last she burst into tears and hurried out of the drawing-room, making gestures half passionate, half imploring to Alicia, not to follow her.

Colonel Quentin did not make his appearance in the drawing-room. He sent his excuses by Mr. Prinker, who came up alone, and seemed much relieved to find only his wife.

"Alicia, my love," Mr. Prinker said, "that man must never come here again?"

"What man, Robert?"

"That fellow Tyrone. It's all absurd, you know, ridiculous, disgraceful! Your sister must have some sense; I wonder at her want of spirit—want of spirit, positively."

Alicia shook her head in gentle deprecation. Alas, want of spirit was not the fault usually attributed to Jennie.

"*I* call it want of spirit, and nothing else," said Mr. Prinker. "An English girl ought to be ashamed to have anything to do with a disloyal Irish conspirator! That man is an enemy of the Queen, and the throne, and the Church, and everything. I mean, everything that English people are bound to respect."

"I am sure Jennie doesn't mean to be an enemy to the throne and the Church and all that," pleaded Alicia. "But she doesn't think about it, Robert, in that light."

"Then we must get her to think about it in that light; we must put it to her in that light. We must be firm with her, very firm."

Alicia had a great deal of firmness. She revered her husband's wisdom in general; and in this case her opinion went entirely with his; but though she reverenced wisdom, she sometimes would have liked in her heart a little of the quiet wisdom which lets things pass off easily. The firmness

of some people sometimes made her as nervous in advance as the popping off of a soda-water cork by an awkward hand—a thing which she always disliked.

"Jennie is a little peculiar, Robert, dear," she said—as if Robert didn't know! "We shall have to be careful. To be harsh with her might only make her do the very thing we don't want. It generally did. We almost always found, poor papa and I, that we could manage things ever so much better by coming about them indirectly. Oh, Robert, I am so sorry for her. I know she is suffering ever so much, though she won't say it. She is so sweet and good, though she has odd ways. Oh, I wish she had never seen him."

"Yes, yes, of course, exactly. But that can't be helped now. I am not going to let your sister, my love, be sacrificed to a Fenian and a pauper, and, yes, and a libertine, a downright libertine, Alicia; yes, I know what I am speaking about, you may be sure, although one can't exactly——"

Then Mr. Prinker waved his hands grandly as if to intimate that only his sense of what was due to the presence of a lady forbade him to make some terrible revelation. Mr. Prinker always held that even married women should never be supposed to know anything more than it was proper for school-girls to speak of.

"I never liked him," said Alicia, simply. "But I thought he was very good—now."

"I am sorry to say that that is not so. People like that don't get better; they get worse."

"That would be dreadful for dear Jennie."

"It shan't happen, Alicia. I'll put a stop to it. I'm determined upon that! Anyhow he shall never enter these doors again. I'll write to him and tell him so."

"If we could only first prevail on Jennie——"

"He shan't come into this house, Alicia, any more, whatever happens."

Alicia felt wretchedly uncomfortable.

"I think, Robert, if it could be explained to Jennie, made certain in some way, that Mr. Tyrone really was a bad man; if she could be convinced of that, she would give him up. Oh, I am sure she would! But it would be so hard to convince her. She thinks he is a regular hero and an angel—girls are so queer! But if she could be satisfied——"

"How could that be? How could you talk to a girl about such things? How could any one explain to a girl that——"

Mr. Prinker waved his hands again to suggest meanings beyond the power of modest words.

"Yes, I suppose so," Alicia said in assent, though she did not well know what she supposed, and what it was that one could or could not explain to a girl.

"No, my love," Mr. Prinker continued, grandly, "your sister is too young to judge of these things for herself, and she must allow herself to be guided by us who have her interest at heart. We must save her, my dear, from all this. She has no other friends."

Mr. Prinker looked really concerned for Jennie, and manly in his honest wrong-headedness. Alicia's eyes filled with tears.

"There's Quentin now," said Mr. Prinker, abruptly. "Look at Quentin; a clever fellow—a rising man—he has English blood in his veins. Quentin, family all English on both sides. Quentin has spoken to me to-night frankly about your sister, and of course I promised to speak to you. Quentin wants to ask Jennie to marry him; and I tell you what, Alicia, his prospects are excellent, and she couldn't do a better thing."

"I always knew Colonel Quentin admired Jennie," said Alicia. "I wish she would have him; it would be better in every way."

At the bottom of the hearts of this excellent elderly man and this good and unselfish young woman there was a lurking sense that Tyrone, with all his poverty, had always looked down upon them, and thought them beneath him in social position, and that were there no solid advantages to be had from it, it would be uncomfortable to have such a connexion.

"Well, we must break off this most unfortunate engagement, anyhow," said Mr. Prinker, rising with resolute aspect, and preparing to withdraw to his study. Alicia assumed that he was going to write to Tyrone, and she almost trembled, but she felt sure that her husband was right; and thus these two good people, faithfully acting on their conviction for the best, set themselves to plot for an object which, were it to succeed, must mar two generous lives, and set the heart of a pure and spirited girl bleeding for ever.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

NEXT morning Tyrone found three letters awaiting him which promised, each by a handwriting he knew, to be something out of the ordinary mass of applications, remonstrances, petitions, complaints, denunciations, and invitations, which a conspicuous member of Parliament is in the daily habit of finding at his table. One was in the hand of Mrs. Lorn, and Tyrone gave it the precedence, opening it, however, rather reluctantly. It was short.

"I beg of you, my dear friend, to come and see me to-day. I so want to see you. Any time after three. SELINA."

Another letter was from Paris, and was inscribed in the manly hand of General Macan.

"The Hon. Mr. Tyrone. "Grand Hotel, Paris.

"DEAR SIR,—Before this reaches you, I shall be on my way to the bosom of the unnatural parent—stepmother, I mean—London, of course. Great things are in the womb of Time—droll, too, because Time, I think, is generally represented as a man. I hope you will not object to my calling on you. Would not intrude, but necessity has no laws of etiquette. The times are out of joint! Some of us are determined to try to set them right. For Ireland!

"FELIX MACAN (General)."

"Confound this mad buffoon!" said Tyrone to himself. "Am I to be the confidant and butt of all the crazy Fenians of the world?"

Then he took up Mr. Prinker's letter, for that was the third, and it was in obedience to some impulse he could not explain that he had kept it to the last. He opened it slowly, anticipating vaguely something disagreeable, and he read:

"SIR,—On behalf of my wife, the nearest surviving relative of Miss Jennie Aspar, and on behalf of myself, who may be regarded morally, if not in strict law, as the guardian of that young lady, I have to urge upon you the extreme desirability of your relinquishing all idea of an engagement with her. Mrs. Prinker and myself are convinced that such an engagement was only accepted in an incautious moment by a young

lady of impulsive character; and we are equally convinced that it is imperative on us, as entrusted with the responsibility of watching over her interest and her happiness, to insist upon its being relinquished. I think you will yourself see, after recent events, the impossibility of any matrimonial contract between a lady of loyal English family and yourself, even if there were not other objections of a grave and personal character on which, for obvious reasons, I forbear to dwell—to render such a scheme dangerous for the happiness of the young lady, and entirely undesirable to her relations and connections. I trust you will see the necessity of refraining from any course which would place a young lady, still considerably under age, in a position of antagonism with her only relatives; and in any case Mrs. Prinker and myself feel reluctantly compelled to decline the honour of any further visits from you.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"Robert John Prinker.

"Maurice Fitz Hugh Tyrone, Esq., M.P."

It would indeed be idle to attempt any adequate description of the effect which this letter produced upon the proud and impetuous spirit of Tyrone. His character was of that peculiarly Celtic mould so common among the higher temperaments of the race, but so seldom described in literature; the character, above all other things, sensitive, and in no ignoble or selfish way egotistical. There was little in Tyrone of that serene, self-satisfied Anglo-Saxon pride which can take no offence from any source that seems beneath itself. Men like Tyrone are usually far too sensitive for their own happiness, and even for their own pride. Full of personal courage, delighting in all antagonism and stress and danger, as in a bracing breeze, our young hero always found a certain soothing and gratifying personal influence in that very antagonism which animated and sustained his self-respect. In the wreck of his personal fortunes; in the conviction that he had himself been to blame for the pecuniary difficulties which cramped him; in his shame and regret for his past follies and weaknesses, there was something exalting in the thought that he could still make himself worth denunciation and opposition. But this letter from Mr. Prinker smote him with the bitterest pang of humiliation. It did not as yet

give him much disappointment or alarm, for he did not believe that anything Mr. Prinker could possibly do would control or influence Jennie. Of her heart and her devotion our young prince thought himself tolerably sure. But he felt the insult contained in old Prinker's letter as a chained man might have felt a blow in the face which he cannot resent. In his heart, Tyrone had always believed himself to be making a profound sacrifice to love when he stooped to a connexion with Mr. Prinker. What he had never dreamed of was that he, the heir of all the ages of the Tyrones, could be rejected with contumely—spurned from Mr. Prinker's door! He had abased all his fantastic and mediæval pride of family at the feet of a commonplace vulgar *parvenu* blockhead, and his homage had been rejected with contempt! Oh, how profoundly and passionately he felt the insult, and how impotent he was to resent it!

The letter at first dazzled him. He stood like one stupefied by the unexpected, unimagined shock. He read it over again and again, until its ponderous passages had sunk deeply into his memory and his heart; then, in a sudden fit of unreasoning passion, he flung the letter into the grate, and stamped it furiously down among the coals. This little piece of folly did him good; it brought him to himself as a shower of cold water might have done, for it showed him what depth of impotent foolery a man may descend to who flings away his self-control. Tyrone smiled very grimly at his own violence, and, at some risk to his fingers, hastily rescued Mr. Prinker's letter.

Reason came back to his mind with the act, and with reason came a rush of love.

"Jennie must be thought of first in all this," he said to himself; "nothing shall be done that could distress Jennie. It's a thousand times worse for her than for me. She will have to endure these people all day long, and every day, until I can manage to release her. She's worth it all—worth anything. Come, there is one good thing in all this. She says I despise her people. Well, she shall see! They insult me, and show that they despise me. She shall see that I can bear all that for *her* sake."

Tyrone was not a hero, a philosopher, or a Christian martyr. But there was, perhaps, in his resolute self-abnegation, at least a dash of the heroic, the philosophic, and the Christian.

He sat down to write an instant reply to Mr. Prinker, which he was resolved should be good-tempered and forbearing. But he stopped at the end of the first sentence. "Prinker is such a pompous old ass," he thought, "that if I am too civil he'll only grow more insolent—and then I shall be certain to lose my temper. *That* wont do."

So he tore up the sheet of paper, threw it in the fire, and walked up and down the room. "Shall I answer it at all?" he asked himself. "What have I to do with the fellow? He is not Jennie's guardian."

Then again he thought, "Jennie is in his house, and if he's not conciliated it will be uncomfortable for her."

And again. "No. I'll have no more of this! I'll ask Jennie to marry me at once."

Perhaps, in Tyrone's perplexity, it was somewhat of a relief to him to know by some loud talk in the hall below, that a pertinacious visitor was about to intrude upon him. This would, perforce, give him pause and breathing time. But he was hardly delighted when a loud creaking step was heard coming up the stairs, and his door was unceremoniously opened, and the stalwart figure of General Macan strode into the room.

"Hail to the Chief!" exclaimed Macan, in his broad, cheery Irish tones. "How do you do, Mr. Tyrone—Tyrone, I mean. Back luck to the 'Mister'—it don't suit you at all."

There was no being out of humour with Macan, for he would not have it. Tyrone would much rather not have had his presence then, but he bore up.

"I didn't expect to see you so soon, General Macan."

"And didn't want to see me at all, perhaps? I know—and I don't blame you. But *noblesse oblige:* a Tyrone can't shut his door against one who comes in the name of the old ancient country."

"Sit down, General Macan," Tyrone said, with rather enforced politeness. "Pray excuse me if I can't quite uphold the character of the Tyrones for hospitality to-day. I am pressed for time, and I expect all manner of visitors presently."

"I'll not keep you long. To tell the truth, I rather took you by surprise—crossed the Channel with my own letter, I suppose. I persuaded your worthy landlady to let me up. At Beauty's door of glass, you know, where wealth and wit once stood, wealth couldn't get in for all his golden

key—but wit brought his diamond and cut his bright way through! Things are different now, I'm thinking. The girls would rather let in Wealth—with the carriage and the house in Fifth Avenue, or Belgrave Square—and leave poor Wit out in the cold, cracking jokes to try to keep up his spirits, and show that he could bear it."

"But I have really so little time——"

"Right you are! I'll come to the point, and once I come to it, I'll stick to it. Look here, Tyrone! Give up these fellows here, and all your rubbish of constitutional agitation, and come with *us!* I've read the papers to-day, and didn't I see how you were treated, and the cause of Ireland too! Give up their humbugging Parliament! England is nearly played out—you may bet your money on that! Come with us, as your ancestors did before you! Don't leave it to be said that there was a struggle for the independence of old Ireland, without a Tyrone in the thick of it." Genuine tears of enthusiasm sparkled in Macan's eyes.

"General Macan, I have told you over and over again that I disapprove of your schemes altogether, and that I haven't the slightest faith in them. I had some hope that you had given them up."

"Given them up! Give Ireland up! Never, by the holy poker—so long as there's a puff of wind in Felix Macan!"

"Macan, this is sheer madness! It is only provoking mere bloodshed, without a chance of success or credit. Do try to look at this thing with the eye of a rational creature. If you think of nothing else, think of the strength of England."

"That for the strength of England!" exclaimed Macan, snapping his fingers. "England's honeycombed like an old rifle-barrel. She's undermined—the heart is out of her! We have her working men with us,—the true grit—Republicans to the backbone, every man jack of them! We've felt our way! Tyrone, I beg your pardon; but it's of no use talking. We've figured all this up, I can tell you; and we know what we're about. Old Europe's a powder-magazine, sir, and we're going to throw in a spark. We'll fly the Green flag, I say, before many days, if it's pleasing to God!"

"Then don't tell me any more of your schemes. I repudiate them from first to last." Tyrone stood up as if to intimate that he would hear no more.

"See here, Tyrone—wait a bit—think of it for God's sake and Ireland's before you refuse! What hope have you from

the roaring mob of Saxons that howled you down last night? Did they show fair play? Is it to them you look for redress of the wrongs of Ireland? Don't they despise Ireland? Don't they despise *you* because you bear an Irish name and an Irish heart? Unprized are her sons till they learn to betray! Ay, sure enough! Come with us! we have men, we have the sinews of war—heaps of money. We have a cause! We'll put you in your right place, and make you a chief and a leader. We have a cause, better than all! Look on this picture—and on this, Tyrone! Better to fight for your country on the hill side than to be shouted down by the beastly bellowing of a set of Cockney scamps!"

"The Cockney scamps, as you call them," said Tyrone, "don't blow up women and children with gunpowder, or shoot men in the back, which is more than can be said for some of your associates, Macan! Look on *that* side of the picture."

"Blood alive!" said Macan, carefully depositing his hat upon the ground, and solemnly rising to his feet, with his eyes staring wildly, "you don't think, Tyrone, that any one of *us* had anything to do with those things?"

"I know that you hadn't; and bad as that fellow Charette is, I don't suppose he had."

"Oh, may I never! Devil a taste! The red-headed thief's a soldier to the backbone! By the immortal Jupiter, Tyrone, I'd almost cut off that right hand"—he extended a brawny fist, bursting out of the bright yellow glove that strove to contain it—"for the pleasure of shooting the blackguards that do these things. See that if I wouldn't!"

"That's all very well," Tyrone said. "*I* believe you, Macan; these cowardly crimes have nothing Irish in their nature that I can see. But you set a conspiracy going, and you stir up all manner of passion for riot and blood, and you have no control over the people you draw into the thing, and the natural result is some frightful business like this. I tell you plainly, that I think you *are* responsible for such results; and if there were no other reason but that I would hold back from you. Remember that this is the first time such things have been done in the name of Ireland!"

"By the immortal Jupiter, and that's true enough!" said Macan, pulling off one of his gloves, crumbling it into a ball, flinging it on the table, and bringing his hand down upon it with a bang, as if he must relieve his feelings by crushing

something. "It's true, Tyrone, and pity 'tis 'tis true, sir! I said as much myself when I heard of it. I felt like throwing over the whole thing. Oh, for a tongue, sir, to curse the slave! These things bring disgrace upon us. I heard it in Paris, standing on the steps of the Grand Hotel, smoking and looking into the court-yard: up there comes a French fellow, and says to a Britisher in his broken English, 'Have you hear ze news from Londres? No? Ze Fenians explode ze houses, murder ze womans and childs!' 'Who murder women and children?' says I. 'The Fenians,' says he. 'You're a damned liar,' says I, right away, quick as a flash—couldn't help it—couldn't hear him say it. Wasn't there a row!"

"But it was true."

"Of course it was! to be sure it was! At least it wasn't the Fenians—*my* Fenians, anyhow; but he couldn't know the difference. When I read the news, do you know, Tyrone, I cried like a big baby, sir. I made a humble apology to my French friend, for he wasn't to blame, and I hadn't ought to have called him a liar. Well, Tyrone, it was no doing of ours. The babe that isn't born, and isn't going to be born, wasn't more innocent of it than my fellows. But the shame of it is on us, sure enough, and we're bound to wash it out. We must show that we can fight! England will respect us when she sees that we can fight. There'll be a fight this time! Let me once get the boys into line, sir, and it's death or glory."

Macan's eyes were dancing in his head with enthusiasm, and he mopped his forehead with a gigantic silk handkerchief. Tyrone looked at him with a blending of wonder, compassion, and admiration. It was impossible to doubt his sincerity and his ardour. There was something positively heroic in that glowing, vulgar face.

"Macan," he exclaimed, "you are a brave and a good fellow! I am sorry to see so stout a heart wasting all its energy and its fire in vain."

"Not in vain this time, Tyrone! Is that why you hold back, because you think it's going to be only a scare all over again? Don't be afraid of that. You'll see we'll fight this time, and that our ancestors shan't have any reason to be ashamed of us. No halting now, I pledge you my word on this, Tyrone! 'Wha so base as be a slave?' man. Give us your hand, and come with us—in life or death, in woe or weal, for Ireland."

"In life and in death," said Tyrone, "I am for Ireland! I am for Ireland's good—for her happiness—and so I am not with you, General Macan. Your projects, I firmly believe, will never come to the firing of a shot. And that's the best thing that can happen for you and the country. If you are able to carry things any farther you may have a few murdered men on your conscience, and the curses of a few widows on your head; but you will never serve Ireland."

"Who isn't for us is against us, Tyrone!" the Fenian exclaimed, passionately.

"Then count me against you! I'll go over to Ireland, and if my voice has any influence I will denounce you and warn everybody against you."

"Then you're lost, Tyrone, and your blood be on your own head!"

"No other blood, shed in vain, shall be on it," Tyrone answered, impetuously. "I'll not hear a word more, Macan, and you had better not remain here any longer, or I may begin to think of what I ought to do for the sake of the country. I never invited your confidence, remember."

"I don't care a red cent about that," said Macan, ruefully, "I'm safe enough; you have not yet gone in for helping the British police to do their work, and there's others in this house that I could trust myself to as well as to you. But I'm sorry to think that this is the answer I must take away from one we had hopes of."

"I have no other answer to give; and no man who knew anything of me could expect anything else. You know little or nothing of the politics or the men of these countries, Macan! It is the curse of Irishmen abroad that their credulity is as great as their ignorance in everything that concerns England and Ireland. Once for all, Macan, I tell you that your Fenianism is an anachronism, and one that must only end in making you and your associates ridiculous."

"'Tis time to go, sure enough," said Macan, "when a Tyrone speaks in that sort of a way. Thank God, Ireland can do without the sons of her old Chiefs—we've the long arm of the lever over in America—see if we don't give things a rise! Good-bye, Tyrone, and God forgive you for deserting the old cause!"

The Fenian threw up his hand into the air with a wild gesture, half of denunciation and half of farewell. Tyrone heard him tramping down the stairs, four at a time. There

was a pause at the door, and Tyrone assumed that his visitor had gone; but Macan had stopped in the hall to exchange a few words, first with the pretty servant (whom he was trying to kiss, until the mistress made her appearance), and then to pay a gallant compliment or two to the mistress herself; and then he swaggered into the street, got into a hansom, and drove away. Not even the wrongs of his country, or the exciting hope of a mighty struggle at the head of a Fenian host, could extinguish the brave General's devotion to the fair sex.

"Rebellion driving about London in a hansom!" thought Tyrone, as he heard the wheels of the Irish Sisera's chariot. "Am I really awake, or only dreaming? Is this the nineteenth century—and St. James's? Is he mad?"

It was the whimsicality of the situation which first, and not unnaturally, caught the attention of Tyrone. But he could not help fearing that there was really an omen of serious evil for Ireland in the return of Macan. With all the fellow's recklessness and buffoonery there was an evident strength of passionate conviction in him; and Quentin had always spoken of him as at once cool and daring in any emergency. For a time Tyrone put away even his thoughts of Jennie, and his wrath at Mr. Prinker's astounding letter, in his perplexity as to the course he ought to take. At last he began to think he saw his way—saw at least the only course he could possibly take with any hope of doing good, and at the same time with something like fidelity to the traditions of his race.

## CHAPTER XXX.

The intrepid Macan bade his charioteer drive him to Pall Mall. He leaned over the front of the hansom cab with his arms squared, and as he smoked his cigar he contemplated the moving life around him with philosophic ease, and perhaps with more than philosophic good temper. An ordinary observer glancing at him as he passed would scarcely have divined that there were such very terrible revolutionary projects hidden somewhere under his jaunty hat.

Macan loved to talk, and when he had no other listener near at hand he talked to himself.

"Well, and it's a fine place too, old London,"—it was thus the Fenian chief admonished himself as he went. "There's

more of the look of a home about it than all the bran-new, spick and span, frosted wedding-cake whiteness of Paris. I suppose fellows grow fond of London, somehow. I dare say I could grow fond of it too if it wasn't for Old Ireland! There's a turn out, coachman with a wig, footmen with buck-wheat flour on their heads—by the immortal Jupiter, to think of human beings wearing a livery like that! There's your bloated aristocracy for you. Solid houses those; there's a neat corner house now for a grocery store, or a first-class rum shop. That's a lovely creature just crossed over; they're real fine, these English girls. There's something solid and comfortable now about their figure; firm and well put together like the houses here. They haven't the faces one sees in Broadway—bedad, my heart's in Broadway, as the fellow's in the song was in the Highlands. Oh, the double stream of little darlings all in their silks and their feathers and their dainty boots, tripping up and down Broadway on the fine days! God be with you, Broadway, and if I should never see you again, 'tis only the cause of Old Ireland that I'd give you up for—and may the devil admire me if my thoughts wouldn't go back from my death-bed on the battle-field for one turn from Grand Street up Broadway to Union Square. I wonder, are there any poor fellows sighing after Piccadilly in that sort of way!

"Farewell, my Spain, a last farewell," he sighed,
"Perchance I may revisit thee no more,
But die, as many an exiled heart has died,
Of its own thirst to see again thy shore."

That's the real poetry, Byron, my boy; 'of its own thirst to see again thy shore.' Oh, by the immortal nine, the girls ain't so pretty as our Broadway lasses, but they've good figures: no padding there, you bet. Blazes, here we are!"

Motion always kept Macan in the best of spirits. When he got out of the cab and stood on the pavement before Colonel Quentin's offices, he began at once to think ruefully of Tyrone's flat refusal to have art or part in the Fenian enterprise. He rattled upstairs to Quentin's room, however, and burst in upon his friend, who was reading the paper alone.

"How's your health, Boss!" was the cordial exclamation of the Fenian.

"You here, Macan!" said Quentin, putting down the paper with a surprise which hardly seemed quite genuine.

"Didn't you expect me really, Phil? Why, I sent you a warning. No matter, I'm here in passing only. The eagle, sir, of the Connemara mountains is going to make his swoop on the lair of the Saxon at last."

"Then you really are persevering in this business?"

"Persevering? *Nix versteh*, as the Dutchman says. What the earthquakes do you mean? Do you think I'm not Old Ireland's until death?"

"But is there really any chance; is there any organization at all? Stay, Macan, I don't want to know, I'd much better not know anything more about your plans. If I am to render any service to you here as a personal friend, it must be by keeping quite outside your circle. Of course you know that Charette has escaped."

"Ask me if I know it," the astute Macan replied with a wink of his eye. "Bedad he has a genius for war, has that same Charette. He's Mars in a pair of stays, sir—I bet two dollars and a half he wears stays. He's off already, 'In the ranks of death you'll find him.' And look here, Quentin, the fun of the thing is this, that devil a thanks he'll ever get in Ireland, anyhow. He don't understand their ways, nor they his—if he don't raise Cain before he's long in the camp it's a pity. What does he do one night up yonder?—'Harp of Erin,' you know—but treat some of our boys to a harangue on the glory of Garibaldi—our Catholic boys that would hang Garibaldi on a sour apple tree if they had the chance, and he's always on with some blatherumskite about the Revolution as he calls it. The creature's half a luny, I think myself, but he has a taste for a fight anyhow."

"Beggars can't be choosers, I suppose," said Colonel Quentin, carelessly. "Have you secured Tyrone?"

"Devil a bit," Macan replied, rubbing his head. "He's not for us—he'll not come, I can't move him, more's the pity. That's the man I wanted; one of the real old Irish chiefs; better than an army of your Charettes that never could understand what they were fighting for at all. But he wont go with us, and I tell you what it is, Phil, some of his words hang heavy on my soul."

"Indeed? Trying to bring you back to your allegiance to Queen Victoria?"

"Dry up that, Master Phil! I owe allegiance to Uncle Sam and the Stars and Stripes. Oh sure, God protect them same Stars and Stripes, whatever becomes of Felix Macan,

and may they flutter, sir, ere long, from the frozen shores of Labrador——"

"Yes, yes, to the glowing waves of the Gulf of Mexico! We know all about that," said Quentin, contemptuously, "but we're not at a Cooper Institute mass meeting now, Macan. Just tell me why Tyrone's words had such an effect upon you."

"Well, sir, there was something awfully serious about them. Look here, Phil, these Irish countrymen of mine, these fellows who came to New York as delegates, they can't have been mistaken about the organization in Ireland, can they? I have a whole bundle of figures and facts here in my pocket."

"An army on paper?"

"Well, it's on paper here, sure enough, but I hope 'twill turn out on the green sod too. And it will, you'll see, I don't doubt it one bit, but I just wish I hadn't seen Tyrone at all since he ain't going to do us any good. One thing, Phil, I promise you, there'll be a fight this time! I'm not going back to New York without doing something. The funds that I have here were never meant to be thrown away on a mere scare."

"As Tyrone thinks it will prove?"

"Why, yes, Phil; but don't you believe a word of that. He's wrong; he knows nothing about it, and maybe, between ourselves, the cause is just as well off without him. He's losing ground every day in Ireland; that I know."

"And losing ground here for Ireland. You heard of the scene in the House of Commons last night?"

"To be sure I did. Worse than any bit of rowdyism ever was seen in Washington. Yes, he's losing ground here; but it isn't for any good to Ireland. And what can a man expect if he tries to sit between two stools? He'd better turn Englishman at once."

"Is it true," asked Quentin, now with some earnestness in his tone, "that he is really becoming so unpopular in Ireland?"

"True? True as the Declaration of Independence! He wouldn't do well to go over there in a time of disturbance. There are plenty of boys that already look upon him as a traitor, and wouldn't think much of drawing a bead on him, as the western fellows say. One has to put up with all sorts of recruits, Phil; and, by the immortal, if I don't know fellows who would think it just the right thing to blow Tyrone's

brains out! But I'll have none of that work, anyhow. This is a big thing, Phil—a great cause; it shan't be stained by any work of that sort if I can help it, anyhow."

"Then it isn't quite safe for him to go to Ireland?"

"Oh, well, I wouldn't say that; threatened men live long. Our Irish boys haven't much of the assassin spirit about them; never had, Phil; but still one can't answer for everybody, and there are some queer chaps among our recruits; and, by George, anything might happen; the one thing our people can't stand is a renegade."

Colonel Quentin remained silent for a moment, apparently thinking. Then he looked up and said carelessly—

"Then there really is to be something done this time?"

"You bet your dollars on that! I come across the Atlantic bound to do something. The funds that I have ain't out of your imperial treasury; they are the hard-earned greenbacks given freely out of the savings of many decent boys and girls that will never see more the land of their heart's hopes; and, by God, sir, they shall have some value for their greenbacks! I'll fly the green flag, sir, if it never floated again, and if it floated the next moment over my grave!"

"Well," said Quentin, rising from his chair as if inclined to cut short the discussion, "you know, Macan, that you have my good wishes. I am an American and not an Irishman, but my duty to my own government and the bond of a business connexion with England—you see there is something of the kind—don't prevent me from giving my sympathy to the cause; that is, when there is a cause, and when that flag is flying, if it does fly. Just now, there is nothing of the kind before the world, and I have only to wish my old comrade Captain Macan success in his enterprise, whatever it be, and to recommend him not to lose time in dangerous places."

Macan looked at first rather discomfited by the studied coldness of Quentin's words, and the unusual title of "Captain," and he cast his eyes with unfriendly glance around the business arrangements of the room. But he presently remembered the significant emphasis with which Quentin had said "If I am to be of any service to you here, it must be by keeping quite outside your circle." His darkening brow brightened again, and he said with a cheery smile—

"All right, Colonel Quentin, bully for you, Mr. Secretary, or whatever your honourable position is. Not another word, sir, on that subject. But look at here, Phil, I want you to

take care of some funds for me that I couldn't well be lodging in the Bank of England, because I may want to draw them out at any moment, sir, and the bank couldn't stand the strain, don't you see? I can't lodge them in the bank, and if anything happened to me on the way I'm afraid the funds wouldn't be applied to the proper purposes. Now you'll keep the money, and I'll give you notice just when I want it, and how to send it, you see. It's a reserve fund, Phil, and I want to leave it with you, because then I'll be sure that it isn't muddled away, and that it wont be drawn before it's actually wanted.

"How much is it?"

Macan pulled out a huge purse of that kind which is known in the United States as a wallet, and which opening out shows the "greenbacks" lying their full length.

"It's all in greenbacks, Phil," he said, "but you can have them changed; we'll want English notes."

Then he began counting out on the desk his rouleau of notes, each for one thousand dollars. Twenty of these he put down.

"How much is that in British money, Phil?"

"At present rates about three thousand pounds and a little extra. That isn't all you've got, surely? There doesn't seem much warlike enterprise in *that*."

"No," said Macan, a little depressed, "we've got a good deal more than that, but it will be wanted right away, and I leave that much as a reserve. Remember, Phil, it isn't the case of a foreign army invading a hostile land, my boy; there's a population there panting to receive us, and we only want to strike a blow."

"To be sure," Quentin replied carelessly; "I had forgotten that. Do you want a receipt for this, Macan?"

"Nary bit, sir. I can trust Phil Quentin with the stamps (banknotes), I suppose? Seems to me too, Phil, anyhow, that the less writing passes between you and me on the subject the better. Brave men have been made prisoners before now, eh, Phil? and if I was captured by the mercenary troops of the British Government, it would hardly suit your book to have a receipt signed 'Philip Quentin,' found among my confiscated possessions."

"Well, that is true enough," Colonel Quentin observed, and then he made a single memorandum in a book, noting the amount received from "F. M.," which he showed to Macan.

"All right, Phil. Now I'm gone. I'm going down to Manchester first; we've some good men there, and then to Liverpool; and then for the death grapple, sir! Just one word," and he bent over Quentin and whispered a good many explanatory words into his ear, chiefly to arrange for ways of intercommunication. Quentin listened in silence, nodding his head now and then to signify that he understood.

"Now, Phill, old man, good-bye. I may have the luck of better fellows, and find a soldier's grave. Don't forget your old comrade over many a fire in the woods, and under many a fire from the Rebs! Perhaps we'll have a good time together yet, and talk this over! Anyhow"——and here Macan broke, for the first time that day, into a snatch of song—

"'A soldier's life's the life for me,
A soldier's death, so Ireland's free!'"

Then he wrung Quentin's hand warmly. There was a soft, sentimental spot in the jovial Fenian's nature, and as he held the hand of his companion, and thought for a moment of their past dangers and pleasures, their battles and their drinking-bouts, a moisture came over his twinkling eyes. Quentin returned with a strong gripe the pressure of his hand.

"'Tis said, man, and farewell—as Mark Antony puts it," Macan exclaimed, with a resolve to be cheerful. "Farewell! Phil Quentin—if we shouldn't meet again, good luck to you every day you see a paving stone, and every day you don't; and when you return to the Empire City, give all our friends the hearty wishes of Felix Macan. God save Ireland!"

He took off his hat, waved it round his head, then set it jauntily on again, glanced quickly about the room in search of a looking-glass—saw that there was none, gave a hasty touch or two to his locks without the aid of a mirror, and presently disappeared.

With a certain sense of relief, Quentin heard his cab rattle away.

With a sense of relief, and yet surely not quite without regret. For a moment there was a revulsion of feeling, and the regret came up pretty strongly. There had been a strange kind of friendship, queerly bordering on affection, between these men, so utterly unlike in character, in ways, and in objects. Many a time Philip Quentin had been glad of the companionship of Macan, when he could have borne with no one else. Macan was boundlessly tolerant—he never

cared whether Philip talked or was silent, it was all the same to him. He had no scruples so far as the conduct of his friends was concerned. He seemed to hold the man as something separate from his actions, and if you were Felix Macan's friend, you might have been convicted of anything, except perhaps cowardice or pocket-picking, and it would in no wise have lessened the warmth of his friendship. There were many things which Macan himself would not have done, but which he was quite ready to excuse in a friend, just as he would have looked over some eccentricity in political opinion, or in deportment or dress. Macan, in fact, regarded nearly all moral offences much as people in society regard certain tolerated offences—as errors that one would probably rather his friend did not commit, but which were no just cause for the withdrawal or even the diminution of friendship. Therefore, Quentin always felt safe and free with Macan, and hitherto at least had had nothing which he would have cared to conceal through fear of Macan's moral censure. If, however, our Fenian makes his character at all intelligible, it will be plain that fidelity to a cause was one thing which, with courage, ranked as essential to the nature of a man. Indeed, fidelity to one's cause ranked with him in a sort of way above courage. He knew there were different kinds of courage. For example, he had always observed that Quentin was nervous and restless while anything was still in expectation, but that he became fearless in the actual moment of trial and danger, while he, Macan himself, never knew his animal spirits to desert him at any moment, first or last. Therefore Macan did not insist upon every man being brave after his, Macan's, own fashion. But he knew of only one kind of political fidelity, and the man who wanted that, was, by that one defect, filled with faults.

Quentin looked out of the window long after Macan had disappeared, and thought of all this—of the many days and nights they had spent in companionship; of Macan's dauntless soul and sunny temper; of his steadfast loyalty to his friends and his cause, and of the errand he was now going on—and amid all his own schemes, he could not suppress a pang of regret. But when he began to return to his own hopes and fears, the regret was again swallowed up in the sense of mere relief.

For some time past his Fenian connexion had become only a difficulty and a burthen to him. When he first came to

London, he thought it a sort of advantage—apart from the companionship—to have any connexion with any manner of definite enterprise. He came as a mere adventurer, whom the close of a long war and the prospect of a long peace had deprived of any career for a craving ambition. He purposed to make everything subservient to his efforts to secure the New York fortune; but it was by no means certain that meanwhile he might not engage in the Fenian cause, if it showed to have anything like the importance and the promise which it was made to present. Old Tyrone's will contained no clause to exclude him, no matter what movement he might engage in; and to have taken part in a successful rebellion against England, would be a splendid feather in one's cap wherewith to return to America. Of course, too, there was the greater likelihood of his being able to draw Tyrone into the movement if he himself were engaged in it. Therefore, Colonel Quentin was not unwilling to come to England under the wing of General Macan and the Fenian enterprise.

But when he had been some time in England, all this began to change. He saw very soon, with perfect clearness, the shallow and hollow nature of the Fenian enterprise, and he knew that there were no feathers for any cap to be made out of that. The mining projects which he had undertaken to put out in England, promised a more rapid success than he had expected. His acquaintance with Mr. Prinker seemed to open out many alluring prospects. He had come over to London imagining that he must live like a mere foreigner there; that the taint of an aristocratic system was all over society, and that it would be a hard task for him to get any door opened to him. He found, on the contrary, a disposition almost everywhere to welcome him and make a lion of him. Mr. Prinker introduced him to many people, and these introduced him to many others. He was always dining out at clubs and in private houses. Never in his life before had he felt himself so much of a gentleman and person in society. There was something in Quentin's manners which, to cultivated Americans who "knew their Pappenheimers," revealed him at once as a man not bred to good society. But by Londoners this was not noticed. The fact of his being a foreigner explained and accounted for everything. If Quentin was not quite like an Englishman of good society, that was only because his manners were foreign and not English. So Quentin became for a time quite a social success in his way.

He liked it immensely. He enjoyed it to the utmost. He had never had any of this sort of thing before. He spent money freely, and as yet he had the money, for his enterprises were opening well. He had the prospect of his possible inheritance still in view. He was revelling in a very Capua of luxury and refinement. He began to forget all about his birth and his bringing up. He was madly in love with Jennie Aspar, and last night's scene in the House of Commons had somehow given him new hopes on every side, for he thought it portended the complete ruin of Tyrone, and he did not know to what lengths despair and anger might not drive the lost prince of the fabulous descent.

Now the presence of Macan and any serious entanglement in the Fenian affairs would have been, in Quentin's opinion, a heavy clog to his career in the future. He had gone a little too far with Macan to break off abruptly, and he had taken a good deal of thought, for two reasons, of the declaration that the life of a renegade from the Fenian cause might not be quite safe against the chances of Fenian revenge. But he was quite determined to draw gradually out of the affair, and he fancied that he had cleverly begun opening the way for his retreat that day. He did not like to go so far as to refuse holding the funds of the Fenians, for such a refusal would be certain to surprise and alarm Macan. But in his heart he hoped that the movement might for the rest run on its course or burst up without his aid; and now that there seemed no hope of Tyrone's being induced to take part in it, even after the scene of last night, Quentin seriously wished that it might prove a mere abortion, and come to nothing.

He put the roll of Fenianism's reserved dollars into his desk. He took the money carelessly, and did not trouble even to count it again. Money was not scarce with him just at present, and the twenty thousand Fenian dollars had no temptation for him yet.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Among the books which Jennie used to read again and again, with special fondness, in the past days, in the Surrey cottage, when real life was as yet only a distant mystery vaguely yearned for, was a volume of old ballads and poems. Among these was the story of the Nut-brown Maid, whose lover, to

test her constancy, tells her that he is a banished man, that he must take to the greenwood, and that if she comes to share his exile she will have to suffer all manner of privations. Each hard trial he pictures for her in separate melancholy verse. She must lodge in the plain with only "a brake, bush, or briar" for roof; she must help to feed herself by the aid of bow and arrows and the wild deer; she must cut her hair to her ears and her kirtle to the knees; she must brave a variety of dangers, and endure calumny and the scorn of her people and her former friends. All this be sure the Nut-brown Maid will readily bear. Jennie had often thought how easy it would be to endure it, and felt proudly convinced that thus far, at least, the Nut-brown Maid, instead of being held up to admiration as the paragon of her sex, and as a proof and pledge that a woman "in love, meek, kind, and stable" is not an impossible thing, was but the type of what any woman, taken at random, would do without second thoughts for the man she loved. Other tests, indeed, were accepted by the Nut-brown Maid, from which Jennie confessed, and with scornful eye, that she would readily draw back, but of these there was with her now no thought or question.

So when she rose the morning after the scene in the House of Commons, Jennie felt an odd sensation, half proud, half droll, as if she were somewhat in the position of the Nut-brown Maid. Oh, how gladly she would bear privation, exile, and calumny for the love of Tyrone! How slight and easy such endurance would be! The thought that a darkening cloud of public reproach hung over him made her feel positively elate for the moment, because she could show how little she cared for it. "I only wish," she said to herself, first with a smile and then with a sigh, "I only wish I had the chance of proving myself like that Nut-brown Maid, that lucky Nut-brown Maid!"

She rose and dressed, full of spirits and of good hope. She thought she would be very happy if only the first post brought her a line or two from her lover, for Miss Jennie felt certain that Tyrone would come or write to her that day. She was sure that he would understand how the scene of the previous night had distressed her for *him*, and that he would give her some word of reassurance if he could not actually come. The morning's post, however, brought nothing from him. She came down to breakfast with Alicia and Mr. Prinker, because she was resolved to put on a brave front in any case.

But she began to feel uncomfortable, and much as a child does that knows it is in disgrace with the family, and that its wrong doings are sure to be talked of the moment it leaves the room. It made things even more uncomfortable that Mr. Prinker and Alicia would not talk about the last night's scene, because, of course, Jennie knew that they were thinking of it. Mr. Prinker had the day's paper, and when he put it away Jennie took it up, and found that it had a long leader piling up wrath and scorn on poor Tyrone. She could not keep in her anger.

"I wonder who those persons are that write for the newspapers?" the angry maiden broke out, with flashing eyes. "How can people write such trash as that? If I were a writer like that I think I would try to understand the feelings of a gentleman, even if I were born a cad, as little Theodore calls it. I think I'd try to understand what the conduct of a gentleman ought to be. But I suppose if one isn't a gentleman by nature, one can't learn to play the part."

If the truth must be spoken this illogical and spiteful little speech was partly meant for Mr. Prinker's comfort. Jennie considered that he had acted a very ungentlemanly part in not standing by Tyrone, and this was her way of conveying her feelings. Mr. Prinker bore the attack, if he understood it, with exasperating forbearance. He was sincerely sorry for Jennie, whom he was trying to serve in his blundering, practical wrong-headed way, and he did not heed a hot word from a generous, impetuous girl's angry little tongue. He gave a quiet glance to Alicia to intimate that they must be forbearing, and must take no notice—a hint quite superfluous to Alicia.

"A man may be a gentleman though he isn't born to it, Jennie," said Mr. Prinker, mildly.

"I suppose so," Jennie observed, meditatively. It must be owned that Jennie, like a true woman, was beginning unconsciously to take on her some of the ways of her lover, and to found her pride upon his pride. "I suppose so. At least a man sometimes is not a gentleman even though he may be born to the rank. Look at Captain Cadsby!"

"Why Captain Cadsby, Jennie?" Alicia asked.

"Well, I suppose he is what people would call a gentleman, wouldn't they? What a low, vulgar creature he is. Did you see him last night?"

"Last night, dear?"

"Yes, he was screaming like the man who sells prawns in the street, and jumping up and down like a harlequin."

"I don't know that Captain Cadsby's is a very good family," said Mr. Prinker, gravely. "His father is only the first peer, you know—belongs to the batch the Whigs made five years ago. I sat near him in the House of Commons for years—the father I mean. But there are provocations which make even a gentleman lose his temper sometimes."

"But not jump and scream in public I think. I can't imagine anything making a gentleman go on in such a manner. I am glad to know that Captain Cadsby is not after all a gentleman—a man of good family. Indeed I thought he could not be."

Mr. Prinker said nothing; and Jennie presently began to feel ashamed of what she had said and repentant. "Could anything be meaner or more spiteful than I have been proving myself?" she thought. "I can't imagine Tyrone acting in such a manner." She endeavoured to make up for her offences by special gentleness and tenderness to Alicia when Mr. Prinker had gone into the City. But she could not bring herself to speak to her sister with anything like confidence about the vague trouble that was pressing on her heart.

Jennie waited in sickening anxiety as hour after hour went by, and brought no message from Tyrone. Mr. Prinker came home to luncheon; Jennie did not make one at the table, for Colonel Quentin was there. In a vague indefinable way Jennie became aware that some sort of mysterious conference was going forward. Alicia drove out after luncheon alone, and did not come back for a long time: and when she did come back she met our heroine with pale face, tremulous lips, and eyes of alarm and pity. Carpenter had been sent for and had been with Alicia; and Jennie could hear from a casual word that her sister had been to see Mrs. Lorn. Alicia went about like some one bursting with an awful secret, dreading to tell it, hardly able to keep it in. Jennie found her sister's eyes now and then furtively resting on herself, with an expression of agonizing compassion. Time after time Jennie longed to ask if anything terrible had happened; but she controlled herself. "There is something going on," she said to herself, "and I am not to be told of it. I'll ask no questions; let them plot their plots, and keep their mysteries to themselves." For in her doubt and pain she was ready to

distrust even Alicia, and to believe that everybody was plotting against herself and Tyrone. That was a terrible day.

Indeed there was a plot in progress against the poor girl's peace—a plot carried on in great measure by those who honestly loved her and believed they were but doing their duty, and saving her from a miserable fate.

Jennie controlled her feelings and her anxiety as well as she could. Once, however, when she caught Alicia's wan and affrighted gaze fixed on her, she could not help saying—

"Do you know, Alicia, that I have been thinking a great deal to-day about a terrible ghost story we used to read long ago? It was about a man who was haunted by a ghost—the figure of a woman who always looked at him as if she were going to tell him some dreadful piece of news, but never spoke a word—always vanished the moment her lips opened to tell the tale, and then came again next night in the same way. Do you remember it?"

"I think so, Jennie; yes, I think I remember it."

"It used to terrify me beyond all other ghost stories, and I used to wonder how the wretched man felt."

"Yes, dear, I wondered too."

"I can understand his feelings to-day. Oh!"

This little ejaculation was caused by Jennie hearing the postman's knock. In a moment a letter was brought to her. She kissed it triumphantly in Alicia's presence, and then ran to her own room.

Of course it was from Tyrone. Jennie had been wild to hear from him, and yet she did not tear the letter open at once. She kissed it again and again, and pressed it to her lips and to her bosom, and fondled it, and went into sweet, indescribable, half insane raptures over it before, at last, she opened it. The first glance was perhaps a little disappointing, for there were only a few lines.

"My dearest Love,—I fear I shall have to go over to Ireland again for a few days, and I don't know how to see you meantime. I implore of you not to distress yourself about Mr. Prinker's letter, or to think for a moment that I could misunderstand you or doubt you. Needless to say that I pay no heed to any dismissal from any one but my sweet Jennie herself, and that I feel myself safe against any from her. In very truth, I am glad of the whole thing, for it will precipitate matters when I come back and compel my Jennie to come

out from behind her barrier of prudence, and trust herself a once and for ever to the unchanging love of

"TYRONE."

Jennie saw to the heart of the letter with the instinct of love. Its tone of good spirits, almost of levity, was but assumed to save her from any distress; to make her believe that the writer thought little of a cruel insult which must have been almost intolerable bitterness to his wounded pride. Mr. Prinker had dared, in her name, to insult her lover—to endeavour to drive him from her. In the first shock of such a discovery, even anger was for the moment stifled in Jennie's heart, and she sent forth a sharp sudden cry of agony at the bare thought of their being parted—at the possibility of such a thing being even imagined by an enemy. Alicia heard the cry below, and ran up to her sister's room, but found the door locked—indeed heard Jennie lock it as she came up the stairs, and went down again sadly.

But the cry of agony was soon over, and in Jennie's heart then arose a wild feeling of anger, of passionate hatred against any one and every one who should have dared to come between her and Tyrone. It was in the first impulse of that anger that she had locked her door against her sister. But even when that first impulse had cooled down she would not go and speak to Alicia. She knew that Alicia must be only a passive agent in anything that was done, and she scorned to upbraid her or question her. So she kept down as well as she could the beatings of her tortured heart, and she read and re-read her lover's letter; and she waited until Mr. Prinker should come in. There was no one, she knew, coming to dinner that day, nor was Mr. Prinker going out. She could, therefore, speak her mind. She dressed, of course, as carefully as usual, and she brushed back her thick hair; and she could not help thinking, as she looked in the glass, that what with the flung-back mane of hair and the angry eyes, she seemed remarkably like a little lion. The whimsical idea did her good, for it made her try to tame herself into a more patient condition.

She heard Mr. Prinker arrive, and she still waited until she knew that Alicia and he were in the drawing-room. Then she went downstairs and entered the room. Mr. Prinker was standing with his back to the fire, earnestly discoursing to Alicia, who sat in a low arm-chair, drawn near to the

hearth, and looked very miserable. When she saw her sister come in she ejaculated, "Oh, Jennie!" alarmed by the girl's pale face and burning eyes.

Jennie had thought of many fine things to say—grand, impressive, scornful, bitter, withering, and what not; but her eloquence all scattered the moment she opened her lips. She could only say, with quick, choking gasps of utterance. "Who wrote to Mr. Tyrone? Who—who dared to interfere? Mr. Prinker? Oh, what wickedness!" and all power of speech was gone for the moment, and she burst into tears.

Alicia was not demonstrative. She did not want feeling, but her nature and temperament rendered it as hard for her to express as for Jennie to suppress her emotions. But she went up to her sister, drew her to the chair in which she had been sitting herself, and placed her there.

Mr. Prinker looked rather awkward; he once or twice opened his mouth to speak, but only shut it again without saying anything. He was quite prepared to justify his conduct, if he got the chance, but how can you justify anything to a passionate girl crying in a chair? When one explains and upholds the most difficult scheme of finance in the presence of even the most discontented and mutinous shareholders there are people to listen to the explanation, to say nothing of the consciousness of proxies and an overwhelming preponderance of voting power. But Jennie would not listen just yet, nor even look at him, and would only sob. Mr. Prinker had never had anything to do with a girl in such a state before, and it must be owned that at that moment he regarded his pretty sister-in-law as the greatest little nuisance with which fate and a sense of duty had ever ordered him to deal.

Jennie, however, was not a girl to waste much time in tears. She soon regained her spirit and sense, and the relief of tears had given her calmness.

"Mr. Prinker," she said, "you had no right to say anything to Mr. Tyrone—or to anybody—for me. You have only wounded me by offending him. You *can't* separate us—nobody can—nothing can. I wish I had never come into this house—I'll leave it to-night! But why did you write to him—what did you say? Will no one tell me? I have a right to know."

"Jennie," Mr. Prinker began, after one or two clearings of his throat and a kind of loosening touch to his collar, as

if to give himself air, "*I* wrote to Mr. Tyrone for your good, my dear."

"For my good! To make me wretched! As if I could have any good without—yes, without him."

"You can't marry Mr. Tyrone, Jennie, and you wouldn't think of it if you only knew——"

"If I knew? Knew what? What do I care? Is he a Fenian? I don't believe he is; but if he were twenty Fenians in one, if he were the King of Fenians, I would—I mean he would be the same—it would be all the same to me! Don't you understand—oh, Alicia! don't you understand me? He is all the world to me!"

Mr. Prinker shook his head gravely. "It isn't that," he said, "although that's bad enough. A man would have been hanged in my younger days for less. Why, it's as good as treason, when there's a rebellion actually going on. But it isn't that—nor even his being poor—I mean nor his being poor. No, Jennie: Mr. Tyrone is a bad young man, a very very bad young man."

"I don't believe it," said Jennie, starting up, with her eyes flashing. "It isn't true, Mr. Prinker—it's all calumny and falsehood, and there isn't a word of truth in it; and you ought not to believe it. Mr. Tyrone is the best man in all the world."

Alicia positively started at this declaration. Mr. Prinker shrugged his shoulders slightly and coughed.

"Yes, the best man! I don't care for your humdrum goodness that never did anything foolish, nor tried to do anything generous or great. I don't care if he spent all his money foolishly and got into debt. Do you think I don't know all about that? Do you think he didn't tell me? Do you think he has any secrets from *me?*"

Here the look of pain and pity which came at once over the faces of both her hearers was too obviously sincere not to startle her. The girl stopped, and looked wildly from one to the other.

"Jennie!" Mr. Prinker stoutly said, "it would not be agreeable to any of us that you should hear, in my presence, what it will be your sister's duty to tell you. When you have heard it, you will then be free to decide for yourself. I cannot constrain you—I would if I could, for your own sake."

Mr. Prinker hastily left the room, feeling that he had done his duty, but was very glad to escape.

Jennie had now braced up her nerves, having no idea what was coming, but quite clear that nothing could be true which threw any stain upon Tyrone.

"Now, Alicia," she said, calmly.

"My darling Jennie, I am so sorry—but it's all true! Mr. Tyrone is very, very bad."

"Is or *was*, dear?" Jennie asked, icily.

"Is, Jennie, *is*. He has not told you everything—we know that he has not."

"But what is it?"

"Well, there's a person—a woman—now, this moment, living in his house—to whom he ought to be married."

"Stuff!" exclaimed Jennie, turning red to her forehead. "I don't believe a word of it! Who has told you these lies?"

"Not lies, dear—not lies. Only all too true! Carpenter himself——"

"Oh! is Carpenter a witness against Mr. Tyrone?"

"Most reluctantly; it was dragged out of him, and only for your good. Carpenter likes him, and wouldn't say a word against him if he could."

"God bless Carpenter!" Jennie broke in, her eyes filling with tears again.

"But Carpenter told us he often saw this same person with him; and that our poor dear father found it out, and that was the reason father didn't like Mr. Tyrone to come to the house. Will you wait here a moment, Jennie, and I will show you that it's too true? Will you, dear—and will you promise not to agitate yourself too much, and not to make a scene?"

"What is coming now?" asked Jennie, with a settled and scornful composure. "Is somebody to be brought forward who has deceived you all?"

"No one has deceived us, dear. Have you courage—have you nerve? Can you go through with it, and not blame the innocent or cause any alarm?"

"I don't know what you are speaking of, Alicia; and if my nerves were weak, I don't know any better way of shattering them than this kind of prelude. Do let us get through the whole thing, my dear, whatever it is. But, I tell you beforehand, it must be an angel of light that can persuade me to believe anything against Mr. Tyrone."

Jennie turned scornfully away, and leaned on the chimney-

piece, and looked into the fire. All this was terrible to her; it seemed odious and degrading, though she could not understand it. She waited after Alicia had left the room in an intensity of emotion that happily bewildered her, and almost deprived her of thought. The clearest perception she had was of a certain strengthening defiance—a conviction that she could believe nothing which told against her lover. She could not arrange her ideas distinctly enough to form out of them any conjecture as to what Alicia had gone for, or what was to come next.

A movement of feet and a rustling of dresses was heard, and Alicia came into the room, leading by the hand a fair, pretty, delicate little girl, with blue eyes.

"This, Jennie," said Alicia, in a tone of affected ease and sweetness—Alicia could dissemble in a good cause as well as the brightest of women—"this is the little girl that lives in Clarges Street."

A strange shiver passed through Jennie, and she looked at the child with such a fixed and piercing look that the little girl drew back alarmed.

"Don't be afraid, my dear," said the good Alicia, performing her disagreeable duty; "this lady is my sister, who wants to speak to you."

For her life Jennie could not then have spoken to the child. She gazed in strange surprise at the pretty face with the blue eyes—so like a face she knew!

"What's your name, my dear? Tell my sister Jennie your name."

"Mattie," said the wee thing, in a clear, musical, sad little voice.

"Your mamma lives in Clarges Street now—in the house where I saw you?" Mrs. Prinker asked, becoming a little tremulous in her painful cross-examination.

"She lives there now," the child said. "We didn't live there always. Papa is out of town now, but he's coming back soon—mamma says so."

"What is your papa, my dear?"

"Papa is a gentleman," the child replied, with a flash of pride, repeating the one little lesson which, in whatever poverty and obscurity, her mother had impressed on her.

Alicia trembled, stammered a little, and at last brought out the question without daring to look at Jennie.

"What's your papa's name, dear?"

"Papa's name is Maurice Tyrone."

Jennie gave forth such a cry that the child started, turned pale, and burst into frightened tears.

"Oh! God have pity on me!" cried the wretched girl; "take that child away—I can't look at her!"

The evening passed away somehow or other and the night; and everything went on superficially as usual. Jennie had the shock of her discovery as a kind of wholesome and needful stupefaction for some hours; and as the morning came she even slept, though always with the dreadful sense of a load of voiceless unspeakable misery pressing on her.

Let us say little of it. It would be idle to endeavour to track out the course of Jennie's fighting soul, fighting amidst such a tossing sea of agonies for the next few hours. Perhaps no words of her own, no clear thoughts in her own mind could do it. A hard sense of pain and bewilderment was the uppermost; all the lights seemed to have gone out, and left her groping in darkness and in torture; all the torment of pain and the distraction of darkness. She had been brought up in such seclusion from the ways of the world, that she had hardly ever formed to herself any distinct perception of what sin was, having glimpses of it only through books, and feeling no inclination to guess at it any further. This was the first time in her life that she had been face to face with anything supposed to belong to it, and now along with its own horrors it also meant her sentence to perpetual solitude and unhappiness. In the bitterness of her heart she could not help wishing at first that they had never told her of this, that she had never known anything about it, but had always been deceived. There were moments, too, when she said to herself, "Oh! if he had but told me of this, told me all, perhaps"—and then she grew ashamed to think that, perhaps, her love might have conquered her pride, as did that of the Nut-brown Maid. The one thing plain and awful was, that everything was changed for her now—that nothing to-day was as it had been yesterday. Her lover was dead. The Tyrone of yesterday existed no longer. For love and life there were now only sin and death.

Alicia plied her pitiless task of duty; so did Mr. Prinker. They appealed to her self-respect, her womanhood, her modesty. They firmly believed the story they had laid before her, and Jennie unfortunately did not think of inquiring too closely into the means by which they had come to know of it.

The final evidence seemed beyond possibility of question, when it came to crown and illustrate the previous statements; and even these, as told to her, appeared hardly to come within the reach of doubt. Perhaps if Jennie had known that Mrs. Lorn was a party in the little combination of zealous protectors; perhaps if she had been told that the child was brought from *her* home, whither she had been affectionately invited, directly to Mrs. Prinker's, she might have been seized with a distrust of the whole story, although in any case the evidence was almost irresistible. If she, or any of them, had only asked the little girl a few questions more, the truth must have come out. The fact that there were not long since two Maurice Tyrones of the same family must have shown itself; but nothing of this kind occurred to anybody. The Prinkers only saw the final and conclusive evidence of what they already believed to be a positive certainty; and Jennie, overwhelmed by such a living testimony, naturally assumed that they had tested the story at every step, and knew it all. So she only cried out in her blind despair, gave the agony of her heart forth in a wail of betrayal, and believed herself deceived where alone on earth she had placed her trust.

Happily for the preservation of her senses, and perhaps of her life, she had resources of spirit and of anger. It remained for her to do something. "Let me go, Alicia," she said to her sister; "I will write to him."

"Write to him, Jennie?"

"I will write to him, Alicia; let me go, please."

So she went upstairs to her own room and locked herself in, and sat down to write. She began—

"You have deceived me, Mr. Tyrone; your own heart will tell you how."

"Romance and folly!" she said, bitterly, tearing up that sheet and flinging it into the fire; and then began another, resolving to be proud and calm, but found that she had written just this—

"Oh, my only love! how could you have deceived me?"

She fired up in anger over her own weakness, and tore this too and burnt it. Now and then she stopped and asked herself, "Is this real? Am I writing thus to Tyrone, my hero, my love who kissed me the other day when we were so happy?" And then she saw the face of the child come up

between her and him, and she wrote with a tolerably firm hand—

"MR. TYRONE,—Our engagement was made too hurriedly, and when I did not know to what I was pledging myself. *I know now*, and I ask you to release me. This will not affect your happiness, and mine in any case is gone for ever."

She felt herself softening and breaking down over her own words, and so she brought her line to a sharp conclusion, signed herself "Jennie Aspar," sealed the letter, addressed it firmly, and went downstairs to Alicia. "Will you send that for me, please?" she said to her sister.

Alicia took the letter and vaguely turned it over. "You were not long," she said. "Is it—is it all over, Jennie?"

"It's all over," said Jennie, turning away.

Alicia put her arm round her sister's waist and kissed her cheek. The cheek was as cold as marble, and Jennie made not the slightest response to her sister's little demonstration of affection.

"Well," Mr. Prinker asked, when he came home that day to luncheon, "how does she bear it?"

"Very well, dear. She has written to him."

"Written to him?"

"Yes; but it's all right, I'm sure. It's all over, I know; she said so."

"That's right. I knew she would act like a proper English girl. And she bears up?"

"Oh yes, very well. Jennie always had great spirit. I was quite surprised how well she bore up when poor papa died. She went about and did everything."

"Very glad, I am sure," said Mr. Prinker, with a sigh of relief, hoping he might never have to do his duty again in the same sort of way. "*He* has left town, I hear, for Ireland."

"Indeed! So much the better; but I hope he will get the letter."

"Oh yes, he's sure to; they always have their letters sent on. There was some talk about the government including him in a prosecution, but I don't suppose that's likely; that sort of thing doesn't do now in such a case. They say he's been to" (Mr. Prinker named the Prime Minister), "or the Home Office, or somewhere, and made some sort of explanation; but I should think that isn't likely. Cadsby says

it's true, and that he knows it; but I should think they'd hardly receive him. They ought not to, but one can't say; they do such odd things sometimes now. Granger says he has offered to go to America, but that's nonsense, I should think."

"I wish he would go," said Alicia, ruefully.

"So do I, I'm sure; but he wont, depend upon it. He's too fond of London life, and all that. Quentin, who's a devilish sharp fellow, says he's pretty sure to marry Mrs. Lorn now. She has plenty of money, and is fond of him, and she wouldn't care, Quentin says, about the—about *that* business, you know. She'll have *them* sent out of the way—provided for somehow. People don't mind *that* sort of thing so much in the south, I believe."

"I am glad Jennie is rescued from him," Mrs. Prinker said, with something like warmth; and that was supposed to be the epitaph of Jennie's love.

Colonel Quentin came that night, and cautiously, curiously studied Jennie's looks. The girl dined at the table as usual, and seemed quite composed.

"Bears it very well, don't she?" Mr. Prinker asked, as they sat alone.

"I don't know," Quentin answered. "Perhaps I don't quite understand your English ways; but she seems to me like a girl turning into stone."

So she was. For days Jennie Aspar seemed like nothing but a girl turning into stone.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Meanwhile Tyrone, full of confidence and courage, sped on to Ireland. He had really had that interview with one of the higher powers which Mr. Prinker refused to believe. A Minister of genius and high spirit has already been mentioned, who saw what was manly in Tyrone, and to him our hero had frankly explained his views, and his whole position in relation to Fenianism, and his honest purpose in hastening over to Ireland. Needless to add that Tyrone said nothing, and was not expected to say anything, about his source of information, or even about those who had thrust their confidence on him. The whole purport of Tyrone's communication only amounted to this—"I, for the sake of

my own country, am anxious to prevent the growth of Fenianism there. I cannot share in your ways of action; I do not want to co-operate with you, for your object is the security of the empire first of all, and mine is the good of Old Ireland first of all. But if you will trust me and not thwart me, I may serve both objects." The Minister appreciated Tyrone, believed in his integrity, did not think any the worse of him for loving his own people best, even in their errors, and spoke a kindly farewell to him.

So Tyrone set out for Ireland, and the last thing he did before leaving Clarges Street was to put into his pocket the little glove which Jennie gave him, or which he took from her, in Hyde Park, and which was to be the pledge of their mutual confidence. It was strange how his spirits rose as he travelled on that night. He felt boyishly elate. He had a kind of faith that he was going to do some good for poor Old Ireland, and he hugged himself in the thought of Jennie's love, and of the life that opened before him. He had flung far away from him all the follies and unworthiness of his past, and began to see his better nature growing gradually disenthralled and strong.

In Ireland he soon found that his task was not easy; Fenianism seemed to have bitten into the very heart of the people. He went about his county addressing public meetings against it and preaching to people in private; and his public meetings were often interrupted, while his private warnings went for nothing among those who alone stood in need of them. His influence with the peasantry had sadly decayed; they already looked upon him as a renegade and a semi-Englishman. The young men in the towns were ardent for a policy more bold and a nationalism more aggressive than his. The wild faith in something grand to be done by the aid of the American Fenians filled whole districts, and put them out of the reach of argument and common sense. Tyrone heard nothing of Macan and his confederates, but there were numberless indications that Fenianism was moving stealthily up and down the country, and that a stroke of some kind was in preparation.

Meanwhile the nationalist journals began to proclaim that Tyrone no longer really represented his county; that at the very next election he would be thrown out by a large majority, and that the sooner some better candidate offered himself the more agreeable it would be for the constituency. Every day

some taunting article appeared, reflecting on the "pseudo-representative," who only kept his seat because his constituency had not yet had a chance of dismissing him with contempt and a curse. Several times he was advised in print to resign decently and not wait for actual expulsion. At last a deputation of his own constituency—a number of delegates representing a considerable proportion of the constituency—formally waited on Tyrone, and requested that as he no longer represented their opinions he would be good enough to resign the seat. This Tyrone promptly refused to do; he declared his conviction that all the intelligence and even the numerical majority of the constituency were still with him, and he courteously bowed the deputation out, and felt in his heart bitter and furious.

The newspapers began nevertheless to report that there was about to be an immediate vacancy in the county; that Tyrone would have to resign; that a requisition, signed by all his constituents except the agents of the non-resident English landlords, was about to be presented to him, calling on him to resign. Rival candidates already began to show themselves; and one suddely dropped from the clouds, whose candidature speedily became a formidable fact.

Mr. Hamilcar Halbert was a barrister in the Temple who possessed a small annual income, a handsome person, graceful manners, a glib tongue, and a boundless ambition. He was a very clever advocate, and he had in his younger days fleshed his rhetorical sword against roystering democrats in the Temple Forum Discussion Society, where no man was more fluent, more ready, more full of antitheses, invective, and rounded sentences. Mr. Halbert had not lately frequented the Temple Forum, and was getting on very well at the bar, but not so fast as his indolence and his ambition at once desired; therefore he longed to get into Parliament, feeling a pretty reasonable confidence that his capacity as a debater there would do more to advance him quickly in his profession than years of slow and steady drudgery in the courts. So he kept his eye open for a chance, but in England he saw none. He could not spend a great deal of money, and he was practically unknown in politics. Once or twice when an opportunity seemed to offer, and he had actually began to court some particular borough, he had hardly taken his first steps when behold some man or men of real political mark and influence came into the field, and Mr. Halbert was

extinguished. He did not despair, for he had too much faith in himself and in his chances, and he was only forty years old. But he began to extend his horizon.

Now Mr. Halbert read a paragraph in one of the London papers about Tyrone and his constituency. His eye lighted with a new hope. He sent for a bundle of Irish papers and went into the matter. Then he sent for more Irish papers, nationalist, and he read himself well up in Fenianism. He went to the Temple library and studied several books upon Ireland. Next he boldly sent to the Irish papers an address, dated from the Temple, London, in which he announced himself as an Englishman who deeply lamented the wrongs done to Ireland, a Protestant who sympathized with the legitimate aspirations of the Roman Catholics, a Liberal who was resolved to embrace to the fullest extent the great principle of the rights of nationalities. He vaguely hinted at a *plebiscite*, and darkly suggested that the wrongs of Ireland would have been set right long ago if it had not been for certain Irishmen who, although the natural representatives of a great cause, had chosen to make it subservient to social position in London, and the patronizing smile of a Minister. The address was very cleverly drawn up. At first it was hardly thought of in the constituency, but when Mr. Halbert himself quickly followed and went to work, holding meeting after meeting, people began to think seriously of it. Halbert talked admirably; he was beyond all question a rising and distinguished member of the English bar; he had money enough to make him seem quite a liberal and dashing gentleman in an Irish country town, and there was a great deal in the resolute cheery way in which he went in to win. Nothing has greater fascination for an Irish constituency than the idea that an Englishman is spontaneously devoting himself to their cause. Mr. Halbert justified Fenianism by all the rights of national freedom, and swept half the population of the county along with him by the emphatic declaration, "Were I not an Englishman, I do not blush to say that I should be a Fenian!"

Not to do Mr. Halbert any grave injustice, it ought to be said that he really knew nothing of what he was talking about, and did not suppose there was any actual organization of Fenianism. He saw no harm therefore in flattering what he believed to be a mere Irish delusion, and he went in for Fenianism in Ireland just as he would have pronounced a panegyric on some semi-mythical Welsh bard at an Eisteddd-

fodd. But the effect was a wonderful success. Mr. Halbert's words flew through the country, they were repeated everywhere and placarded everywhere, and the orator himself was only too glad to say them over again whenever he had an opportunity. To enhance the effect, it so happened that two or three men were committed to prison for supposed Fenianism, by some local justice, on evidence manifestly insufficient, and with a tolerable disregard for law. Mr. Halbert seized this heaven-sent chance, and so overwhelmed the authorities with eloquence and constitutional law, that the prisoners were ordered to be released by the Government, and the whole county went wild over the brilliant English lawyer who had turned from his splendid career in the English Courts, to extract from a despotic power some justice for the Irish peasant.

At first Tyrone was inclined to laugh at all this: but it soon became no laughing matter. When some of his supporters demanded whether the constituency would forsake its own flesh and blood for a stranger and a Saxon, Mr. Halbert retorted rather effectively by demanding how many consecutive months of his life Tyrone had spent in Ireland; whether it was in Ireland and for Ireland's benefit he had squandered his property; whether he could find his way through the streets of Dublin; whether the Faubourg St. Germain and Belgravia are parts of Ireland. Mr. Halbert likened Tyrone to the distinguished Irishman who declared that Ireland was a capital country to live out of. "Gentlemen," Mr. Halbert exclaimed, in one of his most telling addresses, "I own my crime—I am an Englishman. I do not deny the claim of my honourable opponent—he is an Irishman. But he is an Irishman who devotes himself to England—I am an Englishman who devotes himself to Ireland. It is for an Irish constituency to choose between us." The hurrahs which followed might have been heard half a mile off.

Now all this, vexatious as it was, need not have disturbed Tyrone. There was no "honourable opponent" in the electioneering sense, for there was no vacancy, and no prospect of any immediate occasion for an election. Tyrone was member for the county, and Mr. Halbert might have talked himself hoarse without affecting him. Perhaps before the next general election things might have taken an entirely new turn, and Tyrone might have become popular again.

But the latter allowed himself to be goaded into a step which was perhaps Quixotic rather than chivalrous. Taunted here, there, and everywhere with being only a nominal representative, an incubus on the people and the constituency, challenged on all sides to come to a contest and try his claims by submitting them to a public decision, Tyrone followed his natural impulse or instinct. He vowed that no one bearing his name should ever be supposed to hold any place which the confidence and regard of his countrymen did not freely give him, and he announced his determination to resign his seat for the express purpose of offering himself again as a candidate, and allowing the constituency to choose between himself and Mr. Halbert.

Two or three nights after, Mr. Prinker, sitting in the House of Commons, was surprised to hear one of the Treasury Secretaries move for a new writ for the county represented by Tyrone, in the room of the latter honourable member, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

"Done up?" asked Mr. Prinker of the Hon. Captain Cadsby, who sat near.

"Believe not," Cadsby replied. "Going to stand again, people tell me."

"What does that mean?"

"Some requisition from his constituents, I hear—a local quarrel. Brian Boru's an absurd fellow to pay any attention to them; I would not if I were he."

"No; I don't think a man ought to do that sort of thing," Mr. Prinker said, gravely. "Mere Quixotism and nonsense."

The Quixotism and nonsense, however, was an accomplished fact; and Tyrone was already making every preparation he could for the coming struggle, deeply regretting that he had not resigned of his own free will long ago; but resolved, that as things were now, he would fight the course.

Meanwhile he wrote to Jennie, and got no answer. His letter never reached her hands. Mr. and Mrs. Prinker made up their minds that as all had been broken off, and as in the meantime something quite new and decisive promised to occur, it would be mere madness to allow Jennie to receive a letter from Tyrone. It was stopped, and sent back to him unopened.

As yet, in his rapid movements and changings of address, he had not received Jennie Aspar's letter, and knew nothing of what had passed. It was while engaged in a conference

with his Committee one evening that several letters were put into his hands. He picked out at once Jennie's, and one which was evidently in the handwriting of Mr. Prinker. He read Jennie's, and was noticed by those around him to turn very pale and start. He opened Mr. Prinker's: it only contained his own letter returned. Tyrone hastily excused himself, and left the room. He was absent for more than half an hour, and his absence surprised his political friends. Then he came back looking still very pale and stern. He at once resumed the conference in which he had been engaged.

"I am afraid you have heard bad news, Tyrone?" one of his friends said, "for you seem to have had a shock. Something unexpected?"

"Unexpected? Yes!"

"No death, I hope?"

"Oh no; no death. No death. At least there is no on dead that I know of."

"Anything concerning us here? Excuse my asking—I mean anything about this business."

"Nothing at all. Let the galled jade wince! let the galled jade wince!"

His friend thought Tyrone's manner somewhat strange, but of course pressed his questionings no further. For the rest of the night, however, our hero's bearing underwent a decided change. An unnatural excitement seemed to fill him up. He talked a great deal, and brilliantly, and apparently exulted in the coming contest. He drank wine much more freely than was his habit, and was rather cynical and reckless in his talk. When the Committee were separating a crowd came outside the house, chiefly composed of Tyrone's supporters, and cheered for him. Tyrone went to the window, and addressed them in a speech full of audacious rhetoric and heedless brilliancy, in which for the first time during the contest he opened fire upon his opponent with a personal attack. He showed up vivaciously and effectively the London barrister, who, burning for promotion and despairing of inducing any English constituency to accept him, had the hardiness to take his rejected claims and transfer them to an Irish population. Tyrone drew a humorous picture of the lawyer in the Temple, borrowing a map of Ireland to find out the whereabouts of the county he proposed to honour with his candidature; and appealed to Irishmen with any particle of spirit in them not to inflict upon their country the last

degradation by compelling her to kneel down and become a step on which an ambitious and unscrupulous lawyer might mount to an illegitimate promotion. The audience grew wild with delight, and many of Tyrone's friends insisted that if he had begun the campaign in that sort of way he might have driven his opponent from the field.

"Did you ever see Tyrone in such spirits?" said the friend who had questioned him to another. "I was afraid he had got some bad news that time he left the room this evening; but, by Jove, it must have been some famous piece of good news he got that threw him into such splendid humour."

The scene of this evening was the capital town, the assize town of the county. The ruined castle, which was about the last tangible evidence of what had been the family greatness of the Tyrones, stood on the verge of the sea-coast, some thirty miles off. This town, where our hero now is, consisted of one long, rather broad, and very straggling main street, with a court-house and a bank, both made of a whitish stone, at one end of it, and a big military barrack at the other, two hotels midway; a few streets with suburban-looking houses branching off on either side, then several squalid cottages, and then a wide, waste, boggy plain. The events of the year were the races and the assizes. At present, however, there were some special excitements. There were the thick and fast rumours of coming Fenian risings, of the landing on the coast of Heaven knows what legions of American sympathizers, and there was the nearer and more palpable excitement of the election meetings. The town, therefore, bubbled and boiled over with commotion. The very pigs seemed to partake of the prevailing animation, and, instead of lounging and nozzling at their leisure along the main street, ran briskly squeaking hither and thither, disturbed by the unwonted movements of rapid and increasing crowds. Mr. Halbert's Committee had its head-quarters at one hotel, Mr. Tyrone's in the other, and speech-making of some kind was going on pretty well all the day. There was, however, little of drunkenness, and there was absolutely no bribery. The heat of the political issue—Fenianism or no Fenianism—had at all events burned out the worst baseness of electioneering and purified the air. The money which Madame Pinel had paid over to Tyrone was not drawn upon so lavishly as might have been expected.

But, however all that might be, it is certain that Tyrone

had little leisure for solitary reflection. His energetic supporters almost turned day into night, and the corridors of his hotel hardly ever failed to echo to the clattering of noisy and rapid feet. This particular evening Tyrone longed to be alone. His mind was literally tempest-tossed. He had to get through hour after hour of speech-making and listening to speeches, of talking and listening to talk. Half a dozen times after he had, as he thought, got rid of all his friends and enemies for the night his door was besieged by new visitors, advisers, and partisans. It was past two o'clock in the morning when he was fairly left alone, and he knew that he was certain to be allowed no solitude after six.

Alone, then, at last, he took out Jennie's letter and read it again and again. At first it had merely been a bewildering shock like a blow that blinds one. He read and studied it now more calmly, but he could hardly pretend to understand it more clearly. "Our engagement was made too hurriedly and when I did not know to what I was pledging myself." Too hurriedly? Yes; but she knew everything—his ruined future, his past follies, his political convictions—all. "I know now, and I ask you to release me." What does she know now that she did not know six months ago? Had any one calumniated him? Perhaps the actual truth when expounded by some such enemy and Philistine as Prinker might seem enough to Jennie. But this was not what he had believed of her. He thought she would have scorned the talk of such people as that, and that she would have clung firmly to him through all. The thing was plain now; she was not what he had believed her. The young man was bitterly wounded in his love and in his pride. He loved her dearly, in a man's way as fully and fondly as she loved him. He had given her all the faith of his warm and trusting nature; he had believed in her as one believes in heaven. He was so single-minded that he could not conceive the possibility of his distrusting her. He had become purified and strengthened in the hope of being worthy of her. Her image had of late been with him always. For her he had abandoned all the cherished weakness of his family traditions, and had paid positive court to people whom he would otherwise have despised. Mr. Prinker, if he would, could now tell all the world how the last of the Tyrones had craved for the hand of his sister-in-law and had been contemptuously rejected.

But foremost in his mind, above all these less noble thoughts, was the sickening conviction that he had been miserably deluding himself all this time, and that there was no such being as the girl whom he thought he knew—whom he so passionately loved, and who, as he believed, loved him. The worst that he had ever heard of women from the word of satire and the lips of cynicism was justified, and by Jenni Aspar.

"What a fool I have been!" the excited young man exclaimed. "What a blind and miserable fool! Well, there' an end of that. I will release you, Jennie, from all engagement to me. Could I ever have dreamed of this? But I can see it all now. They talked her over and told her anything they pleased of me, truth and lies together, and she yielded and did just as they bade her. They are mean and miserable liars, but how *could* she abandon me for them? Yes, she has done it."

Vague projects or purposes of vengeance were floating through his mind. Vengeance on whom? On this, that, and the other person, according as his frantic conjecture fancied that now and then it seized a victim. But all this was idle, and he soon knew it. He was probably only at the worst sacrificed to the respectabilities of life. The only one who really deserved his rage and resentment was himself.

Tyrone sat in one posture, leaning forward and gazing upon the grate where the white ashes of the extinct turf fire lay in heaps. He sat in this one posture, unconscious of everything around and about him for more than an hour, holding between his fingers his faded and burnt-out cigar. The striking of a clock at length aroused him; he stood up, shivered, and relighted his cigar at the lamp.

"So that dream is over!" he said, bitterly, to himself. "There passes away my first and last thought of love. Well, there's still a world remaining. Jennie, good-bye."

He flung his hand suddenly upwards as if he were flinging something far away for ever. Then he sat down again. There were writing materials scattered over the table—pens, ink-bottles, all manner of sheets and scraps of paper and envelopes, scrawled almost all of them with fragments of draft addresses, suggestions, names, calculations, and the like. He took out an envelope and addressed it to Jennie; then he drew forth the glove which he had taken from her, and, after gazing at it sadly, and perhaps irresolutely, for a

moment, he folded it in the envelope. "There's your release, Jennie," he muttered to himself. "I was to keep it until you ceased to believe in me. Well, I have done so, and I return it now."

Suddenly he remembered that if he sent it through the post directly to Jennie, it might be sent back to him by Mr. Prinker unopened. He enclosed the envelope in another which he addressed to Madame Pinel, begging her to give it herself into the hands of Miss Jennie Aspar.

"She will understand it," he said to himself. "And now, Jennie, we are both free."

But his passion and pain only broke out again and raved more violently, and he felt almost ready, like the hopeless and joyless being in the great poem, to curse love and faith and hope and patience.

And so the morning came and brought him his electioneering work and his noisy partisans again, and dragged him back into prosaic life and bustle, where he bore his pain and his loneliness, his disappointment and his bitterness, along with him.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

The next day went by, and the next, and the next, and Jennie Aspar heard nothing from Tyrone, and still lived Heaven only knows how. At the bottom of her heart the unhappy girl cherished a sick and fond hope that she might hear some explanation from him, or even—she almost blushed at the very thought—some penitent confession and appeal for forgiveness. It is probable that if Tyrone had appeared there upon her threshold and given her no time for thought, but acknowledged the worst and merely implored her pardon, she could not have withstood his appeal. Her special misery was in this distress, that not alone was she cut off from any possible confidence with any other mortal creature as to her thoughts and longings, but that she dared not even frankly acknowledge them to herself. She kept assuring herself over and over again that she did not wish—that she would not have—that which in her secret soul she only craved for. "There can be no explanation," she said, firmly, to herself, "and there is nothing to forgive, for he is not the Tyrone I loved, and all is over;" but in her deepest heart she feared

that she was capable of forgiving him, and even of wishing that he might ask to be forgiven.

Let who can explain it, it is the certain and cruel fact that women who would reject, despite the evidence of their very senses, all other accusations against the man they love, will easily believe a charge of faithlessness—a charge which brings in some other woman. Jennie might well be excused if she believed this particular charge against Tyrone, for surely there seemed evidence enough to place it beyond doubt. It did not occur to her to question it, but in her secret soul she feared that she could forgive it, and therefore vowed to herself, in the hope to strengthen her weak resolve, that it never could be forgiven. "I am not the Nut-brown Maid," she thought, "to consent to share her lover's heart with another woman." All the time she pitied the Nut-brown Maid, and could not scorn her as much as she felt that she ought to have done.

But meanwhile there was no room for pardon or compromise, for the days went on and Jennie Aspar heard nothing from Tyrone. The first sharp excitement of the discovery over, she began to pine and languish. If ever a sick human soul did, with all its strength, long for release from the bondage of life, Jennie Aspar's soul was now filled with such a longing. She craved for death, and began to feel as if she could have no idea of hope or rest but in the stillness of the grave. All her spirits had left her. She was listless and weary. Sleep did not appear to have any power to refresh her, nor food to restore her strength. She had lost even the power of contradiction, and her once quick impetuous temper had tamed itself down to mere apathy. Mr. Prinker greatly admired her self-control, and the ladylike dignity with which she had made up her mind to get rid of an undesirable engagement. He praised Jennie every day to Alicia, who was glad to hear her sister praised, but could hardly understand Jennie's demeanour, and sometimes began to cherish a faint ray of comforting assurance that perhaps, after all, Jennie had not cared so much about Tyrone as they all imagined.

Meanwhile Colonel Quentin had openly renewed, and even pressed, his offer of marriage. His bearing for many days was at once so respectful and so sympathetic that Jennie felt grateful at heart, and she had always liked his conversation and his manner towards her. When, one sudden moment, he

frankly renewed his former appeal, it was done manfully and without insistance. He conveyed to her in a quick word or two that he knew how she had loved and been disappointed, and he even reminded her that he had foreseen and predicted that disappointment; and then he told her, in tones of the deepest earnestness, that he loved her to the very uttermost. And this was true. All the passion of his nature had concentrated itself into a love for her. He told her that he was determined to win her love; and, more than that, to deserve it he would wait any time, he would undergo any test or probation, but he would not recognise a final refusal.

At first Jennie repelled all this firmly, though she could not help being touched—no girl could—by this complete devotion, and the homage of a love that flattered by realities and not by compliments. But she was pressed upon by her sister and her sister's husband. She was alone in soul. She was disappointed and miserable and hopeless, and she did sometimes begin to think that if with her life, now so withered and useless, she could do anything to make a brave man happy, it might perhaps be the best thing she could do with it. It may be that even without her own knowledge some of the wounded pride of a woman who believed herself offended and deceived might have come to Quentin's aid. But there was one thing which decidedly helped his purpose, his intimation that when he had carried through certain schemes in which he was then occupied he meant to return to the United States. Jennie glowed with a sort of returning life at the thought of being taken out of England—away, far away, anywhere, into a new country, where she might steep herself in forgetfulness. Next to the grave itself the thought of a new far country has most fascination for the disappointed and spirit-broken.

Still, when pressed most earnestly, she would only say, "Colonel Quentin, I cannot speak of this, I cannot indeed."

At last he thought he had caught her meaning, as in truth he had. "I understand you now, Miss Aspar, and I only think the better of you. Your feeling is quite right. Let us not speak of it any more for the present."

For he said to himself, "She has not yet heard from *him*. He is busy with his political schemes, or he is trying to induce her to resume the old engagement. She does not feel quite free of him yet."

Quentin was satisfied, and even elated. He felt that he

was gaining ground every day. He believed that, bar miracles, he must win. He had staked all his soul on winning, and in the excitement of his passion for this girl he was becoming indifferent to his other schemes. He had made up his mind that when he once had got Jennie for his wife he would take her away to his own country. He felt no scruple or pang of remorse; he only felt that he could not care one rush for life any more if he did not have her, and he was resolved to be a good husband and to make her happy. He would begin a new life when he had her for his companion. She should be proud of him, and would surely one day love him. All the plans and schemes he had come to work out—the ambition, the revenge, the money—seemed of no account now when compared with the "yes" or "no" of this simple girl. To this it had come with him, and he knew it.

One word may be said in mere palliation of the selfishness of one who had so many sins to answer for and whose life proved such a failure. Quentin sincerely believed that he would make Jennie Aspar more happy than Tyrone could. He believed Tyrone to be a worthless, vain, and dissipated young man, incapable of loving Jennie as he loved her. From the first he had disliked Tyrone, regarding him as self-conceited and indolent, and in every way admirably suited as a husband for Selina Lorn.

The world, therefore, looked bright for the moment to Philip Quentin and he felt young again, as if new blood had been poured into his veins with the impulse of a passionate love far stronger than ever he had felt in his youth. After all, young people delight to fan their little love-flames and make them seem like conflagrations, for the pride and grandeur of the thing, as children collecting a few dry sticks and burning them take pleasure in fancying that the world is on fire. But in maturer years people resist the emotion, and would rather not be troubled by it or supposed amenable to its influence by those around. Therefore when it comes it comes as a very conqueror, and wastes all else to make its stronghold the more secure and its triumph the more complete.

That same night the Prinkers had a small dinner party—a few business connexions of Mr. Prinker and their wives, and half a dozen people who came in the evening. It was a quiet sort of affair, intended to be informal and pleasant, the persons invited being rather those who were supposed to be gratified by an invitation to the house of a wealthy Member

of Parliament than persons whom the Member of Parliament found himself honoured by receiving. Mr. Prinker did this sort of thing at pretty regular intervals, and thought it proper to do. Jennie was in the drawing-room talking with some of the evening arrivals, the guests from the dining-room not having yet come up, when a servant came to say that a lady—a person—particularly wished to see her. Jennie started, she could not tell why, and asked if Mrs. Prinker was not meant. No; the person particularly desired to see Miss Jennie Aspar, and would not detain her a moment. So Jennie ordered her to be shown into a small reception-room below stairs, excused herself, and went down.

Wondering who could wish to speak to her, and why, Jennie entered the reception-room. It was but faintly lighted. A tall, finely-made, dark-complexioned-woman was there whom she had never seen before. Jennie only noticed that she had very beaming dark eyes, and that she looked at her with an expression of curiosity and something like distrust. At least the eyes in the dim light seemed to be peering keenly, as if resolved to see all they could to criticise.

This was what Jennie saw. What Madame Pinel, on the other hand, saw—for this was our worthy friend Johanna, indeed—was a very beautiful and very pale girl in evening dress, with white shoulders and a figure fuller than at first one might have expected from an appearance that seemed almost childlike, and bright, startled eyes, that had now a certain lividness in them and looked hollow. Johanna took in Jennie's whole person and array from head to foot; not a detail escaped her. "She's a little thing for a Tyrone to go wild about," was Madame Pinel's first impression. "I suppose it's the eyes or the shoulders."

"I presume you're Miss Aspar, Miss," Madame Pinel began, with a somewhat dignified and, so to speak, reserved courtesy; "Miss Jennie Aspar, I mean."

"I am the only Miss Aspar there is," Jennie replied in a friendly tone, and naturally inclined to be friendly with every one. "Wont you sit down?"

"No, thank ye, Miss. I ask your pardon for disturbing you; my business is very short, I'm happy to say. It's only to hand ye a letter, Miss, that I was to put into your own hand."

Jennie so palpably started that Madame Pinel could not but observe it.

"I see you know already who it's from, Miss, and I'm free to tell you that I wouldn't have come on such messages of my own good will; but *he* wrote to say he had reason for asking me, and it would be new times with me when I didn't do what he told me. I was to give the letter into your own hand, Miss, and there it is."

She held out the letter, which Jennie was at first about to seize impulsively; but then as impulsively she hesitated.

"Why does—why does he—Mr. Tyrone, send a letter by you? I don't understand this."

"Nor I don't understand it neither, Miss; but I suppose it's no business of mine to understand anything about it. Here's the letter, Miss."

"Are you a friend of Mr. Tyrone's?" asked Jennie, in a sort of bewilderment.

"I am a friend, sure enough, Miss, and a very true friend, though not as you mean it perhaps. I'm an old servant of the family of Tyrone. Me and mine belonged to them for generations. I'm independent now, be praised for it. I'm Madame Pinel, Miss, at your service, and I own the house where Mr. Tyrone lodges; but I'm a servant of the Tyrones ever and always while there's one of them left, and while I'm alive."

Jennie drew back in anger. This woman must have known what she had lately discovered; she must have known it, and sheltered and screened it all the time.

"I'll not take the letter," she said, haughtily; "at least I'll not take it from you."

"Ye can take it or leave it, Miss, just as ye like," said Johanna; "there, it's on the table under your eyes and I wash my hands of it. As to taking it from me, Miss, I can assure you I have my pride too, and the follower of a grand old family doesn't care to be a messenger to everybody. Good evening, Miss." And with a grand curtsey Madame Pinel swept from the room.

Jennie trembled so much that she had to sit down. To her, who did not know that Tyrone's letter had been sent back to him, all this seemed inexplicable. He could not surely have meant to insult her? Oh, heavens! she could not have been so utterly deceived in him.

There lay the letter, white on the crimson cloth. Ah, if it perhaps contained, even yet, some explanation, some appeal! The blood rushed vividly to her forehead as the quick thought

flashed through her. She took the envelope; there was something heavier than a letter in it. The writing was indeed his own. Oh, how many a time had she kissed that inscription in that hand! She was almost tempted to kiss it now.

She opened the envelope; it held nothing but her own glove. No line, no word; only the glove he had taken from her on that happy morning in Hyde Park! All the associations of that bright morning and delicious scene and her joy in it came back upon her—the sun, the grass, the trees, the sky, and the love that glorified them all! Never in life was a girl more happy and hopeful than she was then. And there was the glove which he had taken, and which she bade him always to keep "until I cease to have faith in you!" Yes; for she *had* ceased to have faith in him, and so he had sent her back the glove and all was over! For a moment a wave of remorse swept through Jennie's heart. The glove seemed to bring with it a silent, cold reproach, which extinguished even her grief. Suppose—suppose she had wronged him after all? Oh, what agony; and oh, too, what happiness! Alas, that was impossible. The truth was but too true; the reality only too real. Gone is gone, dead is dead. In her passion and grief she flung herself down, down upon the floor, and sobbed there.

Then came a reaction. She rose, hurried to her own room, washed away as well as she could the traces of tears, and was soon in the drawing-room again. An unusual gaiety seemed to have taken possession of her. She talked to everybody and was quite vivacious. Mrs. Prinker was delighted to see such a change. Jennie, who usually hated piano-playing before strangers, sat down and played several sprightly things.

Colonel Quentin, who saw that some change must have taken place, came near her in the course of the evening and whispered—

"When may I again put *that* question to you?"

"You may put it now," said Jennie, without looking up, but speaking in a low, firm tone. "You may put it now, Colonel Quentin; or stay, this would hardly suit perhaps. You may ask me to-morrow."

"And must I remain in suspense all this night?"

"No. If that really would be such a torture it is not worth your being afflicted with it."

"Then may I hope for the best?"

"If that is for the best, Colonel Quentin. Thanks—no demonstration, please."

So she dismissed him. Her manner was strange, quite unlike anything he had known in her before; but he cared little for that. He felt a rush of blood to his temples in the consciousness of his success. He would have liked to head a charge of cavalry at that moment, just to relieve the pressure of his excitement.

Presently somebody asked Jennie to play on the harp, and she complied, as she would have complied with almost anything that night. She played some commonplace airs, and then gradually, she did not know why or how, found herself gliding into an air which was not commonplace, which sounded strange and wild, and even, perhaps, unpleasant in the ears of most of the listeners—("I do wish she wouldn't play that horrid thing!" said Alicia to herself)—and of which every thrill seemed to Jennie to come from her own torn heart-strings. It was the Irish air she had played on that first and fatal night when Tyrone first appeared on the horizon of her life. All the past came back in the notes; the happy, cruel past! The lights, the faces, the room, around her were extinguished, and she was again playing that air for Tyrone, and watching in wonder and sympathy the visible effect upon his face of the emotions produced. "If I were dead," she thought to herself, "I should like some one to play that air over my coffin as a dirge." She played on with slackening strength and swimming eyes, until at last the contrast between the past and the present became too bitter to bear, and she heard a strange singing in her ears, and the room seemed to sway and rock and then to sink away beneath her, and she clung to the harp-strings as if for mere support; and then a long sigh escaped from her lips and the discord of a broken harp-string clanged through the room, and Jennie fell from her chair in a faint.

Colonel Quentin raised her in a moment, and she was brought to a sofa. All the people crowded about her. "The room is too hot," said Mr. Prinker; "I wish I hadn't consented to have gas in this house, it's dreadful!" "I never knew Jennie to faint before," said Mrs. Prinker, "never! It's quite wonderful." "She has exerted herself too much for our entertainment," one lady suggested. "Open the windows and the door, wheel round the sofa, and place her in a thorough draught," an elderly gentleman recommended.

But Jennie suddenly opened her eyes and said, "Thank you all, I am quite well, only very much ashamed of myself. I always laughed at women who fainted and never believed that the thing was real, and so I suppose I am rightly punished."

Colonel Quentin had not the slightest doubt that Jennie's overwrought feelings had caused her to faint, although he knew nothing of the history of the air she had been playing. But while the knowledge made him, perhaps, feel an additional throb of detestation for Tyrone, it in nowise affected his own delight and triumph. Nay, it was, perhaps, another ray of his triumph to win her even while the memory of his defeated rival was thus strong upon her. He knew that, once married, Jennie would make a faithful wife and would try to be loving, and it would be part of his victory to make her love him in the end. At present he so loved her and had set his heart upon her that he only cared to have her on any terms; and he would rather, if he were driven to the option, have killed her now and with his own hand than seen her become the wife of Tyrone. So he walked home that night with a sort of halo of triumph about his head. On his way he looked into a club of which he was now a member, and he played several games of billiards and won them all. Then, out of sheer excitement, he went off with some acquaintances to the apartments of one of them, where they played cards for high stakes until the grey of morning, and Quentin won everything. He must have done something to give vent to his excitement. "It's no use any one trying to win from *me* just now," he said, exultingly, to himself. "Everything succeeds with me to-night!"

He was up fresh and bright in the morning, however, and went elegantly dressed to Mr. Prinker's house. He was too elegantly dressed for an Englishman, and might, it must be avowed, have seemed a little vulgar but for his dark skin and foreign appearance, which gave excuse for his style of costume. He was commonly taken for a Cuban or South American, and so people did not mind his overdressing and his diamond pin and studs and rings. He had his formal interview with Jennie, and when he was leaving he kissed her with fire mounting into his eyes, and she submitted—sat so still and unresisting that even his love congealed for the moment.

He met Alicia as he went down.

"May I congratulate you?" she asked.

"You may," he answered, "I have won my prize! It is the first great success of my life," he said, almost as if he were speaking to himself. "I find the sensation not so strange as I might have expected. Frost and fire give much the same pain, I believe. Yes, Mrs. Prinker, I have won. It seems curiously like having lost."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Alicia, who never could understand enigmatical speeches of any kind, and therefore disposed of all such difficulties by calling them nonsense and smiling. She knew she should hear the truth clearly from Jennie, and so she again gave her congratulations to Colonel Quentin and got rid of him. Quentin departed less proud somehow of his success than before, hating Tyrone rather more bitterly than ever, and not quite certain whether in his love for Jennie was not mingled, too, an enlarging drop of hate. This at least was a new sensation, and it puzzled him.

Alicia could not find Jennie at first, and so went to her bedroom and knocked, and asked, "May I come in?" and went in. Jennie was sitting in a listless way in an arm-chair, with its back turned to the window. Her arm rested on her knee, her chin on her hand, and she was vacantly looking at the floor.

"Isn't it cold, Alicia?" were the first words she said.

"Cold, dear? No. I don't think so."

"Oh, yes, it's very cold. I feel quite shivery."

"Why don't you have a fire, Jennie?"

"I don't like a fire; I think I'll go to bed."

"Good gracious! Are you unwell, dear?"

"No, Alicia, quite well. But I think I'm cold and sleepy. Has Colonel Quentin gone?"

"He has gone—yes. But, Jennie, am not I to congratulate you?"

"If you like, Alicia."

"You have promised, have you not?"

"Oh yes, I've promised him; didn't he tell you? I don't see any other way of getting rid of the whole affair."

"But, Jennie, my dear, surely you are not sorry for it? You don't dislike Colonel Quentin?"

"I don't dislike him particularly. I don't think I do. I didn't dislike him yesterday, and perhaps I may not to-morrow. What does it matter? I have promised to marry him."

"But, my dear, really now, is that the right sort of spirit?

You know, Jennie, *we* don't want to press you, we only think of your own good. If you really don't like it, it is not too late even yet. Mr. Prinker wouldn't——"

"My mind is quite made up, Alicia. We needn't trouble Mr. Prinker any more about it; I am sure he must be quite sick of me and my affairs already. Besides, my dear," Jennie said, in a strange quick tone, and turning half away, "I don't feel fit for anything else now."

"How, Jennie? I don't understand."

"I feel all over guilty and ashamed."

"Good gracious! What nonsense! What do you mean?"

"Can't you guess?" Jennie asked, listlessly. "I have been kissed by Colonel Quentin three times, I think, and I submitted quietly."

"Why, Jennie," Alicia remonstrated half vexed and half amused, "what can you mean by talking in that sort of way? You would make one angry, only of course I know that you don't mean what you say."

"Don't I? If I could only say all that I mean! I wish I were an authoress. I think I could describe exactly how women feel when first they know that they are shamed and lost, and that they have only themselves to blame!"

"Jennie, Jennie, my dear!"

"Don't be alarmed, Alicia! It's all right, my dear, I have no doubt. Oh yes; I'll keep my promise to Colonel Quentin. That's quite settled. I am not fit for anything else now."

"I don't know what to make of her," the puzzled Alicia uncomfortably said to herself as she came away. "I am afraid she is still thinking of that man," meaning Tyrone.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

The girl turning into stone began to have a terrible influence over the life of Philip Quentin. He had to all appearance gained the summit of his hopes, or at least gained the promise that the way would be opened to him. Yet a singular change now came over him, and he grew day by day more moody, cynical, and sullen. He loved Jennie with all the passion of an ardent nature which had never before known a really devouring emotion. But while he loved her he sometimes almost hated her. He had not thought when in the first flush of his triumph what it is to possess the formal

promise of a woman without one ray of her affection. The passive, ice-cold demeanour of Jennie Aspar maddened him. He might come when he liked and as often, go when he pleased and as soon; he might sit beside her and take her hand, and she was always the same, cold and unmoved. He was free to kiss her when he pleased; the marble Clytie in the drawing-room could not have offered a more passive and unanswering cheek. So the touch of that cheek which had first set him in a flame was now almost a dread to him. A hundred times a day he cursed himself because he could not, do what he would, bring any gleam of welcome into her eye or tremor of emotion into her hand.

Now he had of late neglected almost everything for this girl and his love. She had come and breathed upon the frostwork of his schemes and melted them. The instant one thing went wrong another thing began to go wrong as well. One of his companies was fast going to smash, as he well knew, and yet he did not venture to make any sign of his knowledge or to warn Prinker. He received every now and then alarming little secret messages from his old Fenian associates, which showed him that it is much easier to get into coquetry with foreign rebellion that to get out of it. Macan had entrusted him with the three thousand pounds of the Fenian funds, fully believing that the money would be safest in his calm and neutral hands, and from the hints he was secretly receiving he expected that any day he might be called upon for this money, and at present he had it not. True that his speculations on the whole were not working badly, and he looked for remittances soon from America; but meanwhile the Fenian funds were gone, and he might any day be called to account for them. He began to fear, likewise, that he had committed himself too far to Fenianism, and he even had a dread of being arrested. Full of this fear he had sought an interview with the American Minister in London, who took him very coldly—the better class of his own countrymen always kept shyly aloof from Quentin—and, without openly assuming that he stood on any terms of familiarity with Fenianism, intimated to him that the Government of the United States could afford no protection to any American citizen who on British soil disregarded the political laws of England. Another fear began to haunt him, the dread of assassination by some deceived and disappointed Fenian. Colonel Quentin was, as we have already shown, a man full of courage in

action, but his organization was above all things nervous, and he could not bear anticipated danger. Every day he more and more eagerly promised himself that when he married Jennie he would at once carry her away to his own country.

Meantime he ascribed all his crosses and danger to Tyrone, the memory of whose very manner towards himself still rankled in his breast amid all his more profound emotions. Therefore he delighted in the thought that by marrying Jennie, were she wrought out of the very stone to which he had himself compared her, he would inflict a pang of humiliation on his rival. Nor did he fail to count still upon one grand chance, the chance that Tyrone would instantly in sheer anger and despair marry Mrs. Lorn. "I am the most Christian of enemies," Quentin once said to himself. "I only want to make the man I most dislike the husband of a rich and handsome woman."

He was in this condition of mind when he received one day a sudden and imperative request from Mrs. Lorn that he would come and see her. He obeyed the summons rather unwillingly. He found Selina alone, and looking pale and much disturbed. She had taken care to send Theodore out of the way.

She stood up the moment he entered the room and went hastily to meet him.

"Philip," she exclaimed, "I have sent for you to give you fair warning. Our compact is at an end."

Philip looked at her with a hardly disguised contempt. He had seen enough of these emotional displays already.

"I don't care about play-acting much at any time, Mrs. Lorn," he said, coldly, "and just now the realities of life engage me rather too much. I should like to know—in very plain words, please—what you mean."

"What I say, Philip. I break off from this conspiracy, or whatever it is! You must go your own way; I shall leave London."

"Has he been cold?" Quentin asked, with a sneer.

"He has been as he always is, manly, gentlemanly. Ah, he *is* a gentleman! But he cares nothing for me—no, nothing; and I will not degrade myself any more!"

"Did he tell you he cared nothing for you? That was hardly so like a gentleman, was it?"

"He spoke to me like a friend, a true, brave friend. He touched all that was good in my heart—oh yes, I *have* a heart

still, Colonel Quentin!—when he opened his own soul to me. I know it all now; his heart is with that girl, he still loves her fondly and deeply. He will never marry."

"Did he tell you this?" Quentin asked, turning savagely on her.

"He did. Heaven knows whether it was not in pity and regard for me, to prevent my humbling myself in vain! How manly and noble he is! If I only could have had such a friend always, Philip, I think I should always have been a true and constant woman."

"I don't know," Quentin said, coldly. "You are like other women; you only think the more of a man who wont have you. But if you have managed your love affairs badly, Selina, how can I help you? What is it to me? Excuse my plain words."

"It is this to you, that I'll not any longer keep up my share in this ridiculous story that we concocted about him. I obeyed you in that—I told you all about it the other day—but I'll not keep it up any longer. You have done him harm enough. You have stolen from him the only woman he loved. I'll not have any more to do with the damaging of his reputation."

"I don't think it matters at all," said Quentin, with seeming carelessness. "If that particular story was not true there are plenty of others that are. Do your best and worst, Mrs. Lorn; I see what the effect of my generosity was when, like a fool, I released my hold over you."

"No!" she exclaimed with energy, "it's not that, I declare to you; I shouldn't care now what you said or published about me, true or false. It does not touch me any more. I am defeated, and I am going away with my son; but I will have no more to do with your schemes, and I only hope that we may never meet again."

Quentin stood for a moment with his hands, one of which held his hat, behind his back, and fixed his glittering eyes on her. She was easily quelled and she did not look up.

"Selina," he said, at last, "you are not quite so simple and romantic a person as you give yourself out to be. You are not at all likely to retire from the world quite so soon; you will survive all this without much trouble, and I daresay will find a new lover about the week after next. I advise you not to interfere in what no longer concerns you or to make an enemy of me. If I am driven too far I can perhaps

injure your confidential friend more practically than by merely damaging his reputation for morality. I can be a dangerous enemy to *him;* and if I must be his enemy I will be dangerous. If you care about *him* don't set me against him. Think of all this, Selina. No one shall cross my path with impunity in this affair, you may depend on *that.*"

"I know," she said, passionately, "that you have no pity; you never had!"

"I wonder who ever had pity on me when I stood in need of it? I did take pity on you once, and see what came of it! I think the sooner you leave London the better, Mrs. Lorn; you have about played yourself out here. Anyhow, don't interfere with me, and don't make me the enemy of anybody you care for."

He left her abruptly and left her a prey to vague alarm. For himself he had kept up an appearance of indifference, but her hints and threats wrought heavily upon him. If one word of what she had been saying were to reach Jennie he well knew that she would fling him off. There was a time when he would have welcomed anything which opened up another chance of his securing the money prize which had tempted him into all this labyrinth of scheming. But now that counted for hardly anything with him. The wealth of old Tyrone and the possibility of grasping it had long since ceased to be the central influence of his calculations. He was not greedy of money for itself, and it was not money which could now feed his consuming desires for satisfied love and satisfied revenge.

Mrs. Lorn thought for a long time over his vague threats, and became alarmed lest she should have brought some danger on Tyrone, to whom she still feebly clung in sickly hope. She soon shook off all sense of penitence for the stratagem in which she had been engaged, and gave up her intention of making it known either to Jennie or to Tyrone. When the little tide of good impulse had ebbed away, she secretly acknowledged to herself that she could not bear the idea of seeing a *rapprochement* between Tyrone and Jennie again. So she settled in her mind that the best thing for everybody was that Miss Aspar should be married to Quentin as soon as possible.

But she thought, too, that an appeal to Jennie might be the happy means of inducing her to avert all danger by effecting a sort of reconciliation between Quentin and Tyrone.

The idea seemed charming and romantic. It would gratify half a dozen contending emotions in her mind—her wish to serve Tyrone, not openly to offend Quentin, to show Jennie that she still had some hold upon Tyrone, and so forth.

So the next day she sent her son to see Jennie.

It was with sincere delight that Jennie welcomed Theodore Lorn. She had not seen the boy for some time, although he had promised to visit her often. Either the commands of his mother or the frequent presence of Colonel Quentin at the Prinkers' house had kept him away; and his coming now sent to Jennie Aspar's heart the only warming gleam of gladness it had known for many days.

She ran into the room where the boy was and caught him in her arms and kissed him, and could hardly keep from bursting into tears. Theodore hid his own face for a few seconds, and when he did look up his cheeks were all aflame.

"What a long, long time since I saw you, Theodore!"

"But I say, Jennie, don't you look pale!"

Almost at the same moment these greetings came forth.

"How could I look anything but pale, Theodore, when you never came to see me?" Jennie said, with a great effort to talk cheerily.

"Oh, come now, don't! I'd have come of course, but one has to read up so hard, you know; and then, Jennie, this isn't like the old shop—like the cottage I mean—or like the time when you were with us. I say, wasn't that a jolly time? Very happy time, I mean, of course. But here, you know, here—well, one couldn't come without meeting that fellow. And I tell you what, Jennie, I wont meet him, and that's flat." And Theodore's face, which had been toning down to its original paleness, grew red again and his lip puckered.

"What fellow, Theodore?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Jennie; I oughtn't to have said——"

"You mean Colonel Quentin, Theodore, don't you?"

"Well, I don't like him, and that's all."

"You know we never agreed on that subject, Mr. Theodore. But I want you to like him now—to try to like him—for my sake."

She took the boy's hand gently in hers; she longed to conciliate his affection and to hold it still.

But Theodore jumped up, drawing his hand away from hers.

"I can't, Jennie, I can't! It's no use, and I only like him all the less for that. Why did the cad ever come here? I hate him!"

Jennie's own cheek now coloured a little.

"Theodore, for shame! If you speak in that way how can you and I be friends for the future?"

The boy looked up with a frightened face.

"Oh, Jennie, you and I must be friends. I'll do anything you ask me—at least I'll try—but it's very hard upon a fellow; only you know I'll do anything you like."

"Well, dear, you have done one thing that I like by coming to see me," Jennie said, anxious to give the conversation some other turn.

Theodore glanced with a certain shamefacedness at her.

"I'd have come every day, Jennie, if I might, only for things, you know. But to-day mamma asked me to come and to bring you a letter, and so I came."

"A letter, Theodore?"

"Yes, from mamma. Here it is. I was to give it only to you."

He produced a letter in a pink envelope, with an address in violet ink. Jennie took it, wondering what Mrs. Lorn could have to say to her, and feeling a strong repugnance to any renewal of their intercourse.

"Now, Jennie, I must go," Theodore said. All the time he had shown himself constrained and uneasy; turning his eyes away when she looked at him, eagerly watching her expression when her eyes were not on him, starting and colouring for no apparent reason.

"Must you really go so soon, and I have not seen you for such a time? And when shall I see you again?"

"Oh, I don't know." And he turned away so abruptly that Jennie wondered at his odd roughness. He stood for a full minute as if he were looking out of the window, and then turned round with his handkerchief in his hand.

"Beastly climate this, isn't it? One always has a cold, I think. We're going down south very soon. Nice, I believe. I'm very glad. I'm going to Ireland to-night, Jennie."

"To Ireland, dear?"

"Yes, with Tyrone. There's going to be an election and lots of fun, and he promised to take me ever so long ago."

Jennie found it as hard now to conceal her emotion as poor

Theodore had done to keep down his. It was still enough for her to hear the name.

She had to say something.

"Do you travel to-night, Theodore?"

"O yes; nine o'clock, fast train. Can't lose any time, you know, just now."

"But, my dear boy, do you travel alone?"

"Alone? No, Tyrone's coming too, you know." Theodore had picked up a little of his manhood again as he talked of his journey, and he complacently mentioned Tyrone as "coming too."

"I thought," said Jennie, speaking with difficulty, and as much abashed under the consciousness of her own secret feelings in the mere presence of this child as if her words were the acknowledgment of some guilt, "I thought, Theodore, that Mr. Tyrone was in Ireland."

"Oh, didn't you know? Came back the day before yesterday to make some arrangements, put some things in order; goes back again to-night. Electioneering's hard work, you know, but he doesn't mind; rather likes it, I think. He was at our house yesterday morning, but I didn't know until mamma sent for me just as he was going away."

A bitter pang went through Jennie's heart. He was there with Mrs. Lorn. He would marry her. Ah, well—he was wholly unworthy. He never could have been what she once thought him. And she herself—what of her, what must be his thoughts of her? Was she, too, not unworthy, and wholly unworthy? Was she not degraded in her own eyes? To this, then, it had come with both of them.

"Nothing remains," she thought, "but to go on, on to the end, whatever it be. No turning back is of any avail now."

"Well, Theodore," she said, with some composure of manner, "I must not keep you, dear, since you have a journey to make. I hope it may be very pleasant and that you will enjoy yourself very much, and not take cold, and be very happy. Thank your mamma for me, and good-bye, dear."

She did not kiss him now, but only gave him her hand, which was cold and trembling. Theodore hesitated, stammered a good-bye, put her hand hurriedly and lightly to his lips, and ran out of the room.

"Poor boy!" said Jennie, within herself, "he is so greatly changed and strange. What can be the matter with him?

I suppose we are all changed But why should he be? If he were a girl or a few years older I should say he was in love," and she smiled at the thought, a very wan and sad smile.

Then she opened Mrs. Lorn's letter, expecting only sickly congratulations and the vapid sentimentality of superficial and hollow friendliness.

She had to wade through a good many lines of highflown effusiveness before she came to the point of the letter.

"I have ever known you, Jennie—for I still will call you so—to be far above all meanness and ignoble enmity. I tried once to be kind to you; the Fates did not allow. Perhaps I was compelled by a destiny and an influence you little understand to injure you! *Eh bien*, you only served me in return. Be generous again, and punish my sins once more by an act of goodness.

"I have a friend whom you once—but no, I shall not write the word!—a friend in whom now you still must feel some interest. He has a bitter enemy, whom only you can influence for good. I dare not explain to you—perhaps I could not if I would—the reasons which make me sure that that enemy meditates some harm to my friend. You can save him! Be the peace-maker. There is yet time. My friend is leaving England for a few days, and cannot be in danger until his return. In that interval you can do all. Under your influence hatred can be turned into friendship. Your lightest word will be a command to that stern enemy, who yet has a heart to love. Jennie, fulfil your noblest mission, and bid the hand you take in union be first pledged to the extinction of old enmity.

"Ever your heart's sister and devoted friend,

"SELINA."

Jennie's first impulse was to throw this piece of seemingly meaningless and inflated sentimentalism into the fire. Its hyperbolical affectations were almost insufferable to her in her present mood, and even when she was inclined to judge most genially of Mrs. Lorn, the passion for writing highflown epistles of eternal friendship or pathos had always appeared objectionable and ridiculous. She was not even certain that the whole letter was not a roundabout way of conveying a triumphant assurance that she had succeeded in capturing Tyrone. Still, when our heroine came to think it over, there did seem beneath all the verbiage and nonsense a certain

earnestness of purpose which passed beyond mere sentiment. Some words which Colonel Quentin had lately once or twice let drop did undoubtedly show a bitterly hostile feeling towards Tyrone; and Jennie, though not disposed to take any grand and dramatic view of the situation, yet felt a natural and shuddering repugnance to the endurance of such an enmity.

She determined to go to work directly and openly. "I have nothing to be ashamed of," she thought, "and I have a right to ask this much of Colonel Quentin."

Quentin came to see her that day, and, conscious that she had to deal with him in a certain spirit of confidence, she was a little warmer and kinder than her wont. Quentin noticed the change, and his lips trembled with suppressed excitement. It was strange how the bearing of these two had altered since Jennie had given him her promise. Once she used to be all frank and friendly with him, was glad when he came, was cordial and demonstrative in her welcome. That was when they were friends. Then when first he avowed his love and she refused him she felt drawn to him tenderly by sympathy and kindness, and when he still visited the house and delicately forbore from seeking much conversation with her she always conveyed to him in her manner some evidence of respect and gratefulness. But since she had promised to marry him all that was changed. She held back from him in unconquerable coldness and reluctance, acknowledging him almost as a captive might acknowledge her master. Her thoughts and her real self seemed always far away, as the thoughts of the captive might be in the lost home beyond the mountains and the river. Perhaps she sometimes felt like the poor girl in Voltaire's story—"Ah, que je vous aimerais si vous ne vouliez pas d'être tout aimé!"

But she was a little warmer than usual this day, and Quentin felt it.

"If you only knew," he said, "how much I love you!"

Jennie turned pale. She had heard this so often, and yet never became familiarized to its sound.

"Then," she said, plunging over all difficulties and right into the subject, so as to cut off any retreat, "you will do something to please me if I ask you, Colonel Quentin—if I say that I desire it very much?"

Quentin's eyes lighted, although the manner of her address was still so formal. She had never called him anything but "Colonel Quentin."

"You needn't ask," he said, taking her unresisting hand in his; "only tell me, Jennie, what you wish me to do."

"I want you not to keep up any quarrel, if there is any, with Mr. Tyrone."

Quentin started up and dropped her hand, and his dark face turned a deep red. It may be that some pang of conscience mingled with his other emotions, for as he came along all that day he had been thinking—led to the thought by fancied danger to himself—that Tyrone, too, was hated by the Fenians; that one of them might easily seize the chance of revenge; that in a disturbed country like Ireland any deed might be done; that by whatever hireling hand an assassin's bullet were sent it could be easily ascribed to Fenian revenge. The words of Jennie therefore seemed as if they suddenly replied to his most secret thoughts.

"Why do you mention his name to me?" he asked, in an angry tone, so angry that Jennie coloured and drew back, not being used to tones like that, and from him.

"Only because I think it right," she answered, simply and calmly; "because I cannot bear to be the cause of any quarrels and rancours, if there are any; that is all, Colonel Quentin."

"That man is in your heart still," he exclaimed; "you think of nothing but him! Your thoughts are always with him, even when I try to bring you to think of *me*. Do you think I shall like him any the better for this? I hate him! But *I* have no quarrel with him, mind that! I never think of him unless when you force him on my thoughts. He's in danger enough, I should think, in Ireland, among the Fenians, with whom he has played fast and loose as he did with others! These are his enemies and not I; and if a pistol-ball from behind a hedge *should* bring him down, why should anybody be surprised? If the Fenians have hearts better than those of chickens they will never let that fellow return alive!"

Quentin was walking up and down the room wildly, and jerking out these sentences with a frightful rapidity. He was like a man pouring out some conscience-stricken revelations in a dream. Passion and jealousy had quite shaken his nerves, and the thought of the coward deed over which he had been vaguely brooding, pierced as it suddenly seemed to be by Jennie's simple question, cried out in these wild words with a vain effort at self-justification.

Jennie sat silent and rigid, all her senses strained to their utmost tension. Quentin seemed to her like a madman; she had never seen anything of this kind before. What peculiarly startled and shocked her was this sudden and uncalled for prediction of a possible crime. His words sounded like a pleading of "Thou canst not say *I* did it" proclaimed in advance. She seemed like one who hears by chance the confession of an intended murder; but she did not lose her presence of mind. The moment was of incalculable importance to all her future life.

"I am sorry to have displeased you, Colonel Quentin."

"You have displeased me, Jennie; you have made me mad to hear you name that man's name. How can I help hating him when you show such a tender interest in his welfare? How?"

A terrible line from Shakspeare went through Jennie's memory: "Hates any man the thing he would not kill?" Her wild lover, as he paced the room with his dark face all quivering, looked just the man from whom such a question might have come. She sat and listened in silence, while Quentin still talked wildly on and on. Let a passionate man beware when a woman listens to him in silence! A fixed resolution had come up during these few minutes in Jennie's mind. After a while her steady silence sent a chill of doubt and fear even into Quentin's excited brain. He began to think there was something ominous in that girl, commonly so impetuous, sitting there so silent and motionless. He felt that he had gone too far, and in an instant his passion took another impulse and he turned and positively knelt before her.

"Forgive me, Jennie, for my ill-temper and my angry words! They meant nothing, and I am sorry if I have offended or alarmed you. What can I say more? You don't understand, you sober English people, the heat of our southern blood. When we love as devotedly as I do we are all on fire with jealousy. There is no love without jealousy, is there, Jennie? But I beg for pardon, and I pledge you my word I will never sin in that way again."

It was unspeakably painful to see the strong man abasing himself thus. Jennie rose to her feet, but he clung to her.

"You do forgive me?" he pleaded.

"For any offence to *me*, Colonel Quentin, I do fully forgive you." Then she relapsed into her customary coldness of

manner. Neither said one word more of Tyrone, and Quentin soon went away, distrustful, sullen, not venturing to give any outlet to any of his emotions in her presence again.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the tormented girl when her lover had left her.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

Then she went to her own room and sat down and thought. Somebody, Alicia probably, knocked at the door, but Jennie made no answer. She could not speak with any one just then. One appalling idea was present to her mind, absorbing every other consideration—the idea that Quentin meditated some evil to Tyrone. The more deeply and anxiously she thought of this the more profoundly it impressed her. She felt convinced that in a moment of passion he had really betrayed himself.

One thing was now clear to her mind, clear and settled for ever. She would not marry Quentin. Come over her what reproach there might she would not marry him.

But that only concerned herself and the future. In the meantime what to do? One sudden inspiration filled her—the thought of sending some warning to Tyrone. "However he has disappointed me," she said, "I loved him—once—and I would rather die than know that he stood in danger from which I might have saved him and did not." She thought she would write a letter to him begging him not to go to Ireland. But it was late and it was growing dark; he was leaving town that evening, and he must be warned at once and emphatically. Colonel Quentin was coming back to dinner; there was no time to lose. She sprang to her feet, no longer thinking of doubt or difficulty or the opinion of others, or anything but the one consideration. She threw on a hat, wrapped a shawl round her, went gently, swiftly downstairs, opened the door, and passed into the street. It was a wild and wet night, and Jennie had never before been in the street alone and on foot at such an hour. She drew back for a moment with instinctive alarm at the wind and the rain which beat fiercely upon her. But she thought of the moments so rapidly passing, and she drew her shawl around her and sped, reckless and resolute, on her way.

The rain was still falling heavily, although there was such

a fierce wind, when Jennie stood in Clarges Street outside Tyrone's door. The wind had torn the clouds away and a livid moon looked down like a ghost. The pallid moonlight glittered here and there on the little pools of water, and every swollen gutter became poeticized into a sort of ghastliness and Lethean dismalness by the sad rays. The wind swept people round corners, and baffled panting and bedraggled women fighting miserably against it. The long line of lamps along Piccadilly shone over the wet and moonlit street as if they gleamed upon snow. The night fittingly enshrouded Jennie's wild and anxious purpose: its dreary gusts, its livid light, seemed to speak sympathetically to her heart.

There were many lighted rooms in Clarges Street, and music came from some windows (the work, as Jennie thought, of some happy careless girl at her piano, even as she once used to be), and Jennie sought anxiously with her eyes for lighted rooms in the place where she fancied Tyrone's lodgings must be. It was not an easy task to make out the numbers on the doors. Jennie sometimes felt wretchedly ashamed of herself as she ran up steps and came down again in her search; and in all her excitement she began to be sensible that, wind-blown and wet, she must seem an unpicturesque and even ridiculous figure. More than once she was tempted to go back and give up her chimerical enterprise altogether; but the temptation was dismissed in a moment and she remained true to her purpose. It might be absurd, people might call it unwomanly; she did not care. If she could in the feeblest and remotest way help to keep him from danger—him from whom she was resolutely separated for ever—she would do so, let all the world condemn her.

At last she found the house, and its upper drawing-room windows were lighted. He was, then, at home. In a moment or two they would see each other! What should she say? Her courage was all evaporating.

She paused at the door, on the door-step, trying to summon up resolution to ring. The rattle of a hansom cab up the street startled her and made her withdraw her hand from the bell. She would let that cab pass first. But it stopped at the very door, and she was thrown into alarm and embarrassment.

A little figure leaped out and ran up the steps.

"Oh, Theodore!"

"Why, Jennie! Out all alone in this beastly rain!"

"Are you going to see Mr. Tyrone, Theodore? I want to see him very particularly. I am so glad you came—so very glad! May I go with you?" She spoke so earnestly and plaintively that the boy seemed alarmed.

"Anything up, Jennie—anything gone wrong?"

"Oh no, dear, nothing; only I want to see Mr. Tyrone. And now you'll come with me?"

"All right, Jennie, I'll take you to him. I say, cabby," Theodore called out, assuming at once the ways of a traveller and man about town, "just lift that trunk into the hall, will you? Told you I was going across to-night, Jennie?" Here he rang at the bell without waiting for an answer. When the door was opened he tossed the cabman his fare, with the observation, "Sixpence over the fare; never mind the change, cabby;" and then, like a grand cavalier, offered his arm to Jennie. She clung to her young hero, delighted to have his encouraging presence. Theodore nodded blandly to the simpering servant who opened the door, and saying, "Mr. Tyrone expects me, you know—needn't announce us," he led Jennie upstairs.

Seldom had Jennie's heart beaten so fearfully as whilst they went up these stairs, until Theodore tapped carelessly at the door and the voice of Tyrone himself called them to come in.

They entered. Theodore, with grand courtesy, drew back and signified to Jennie that she must pass in first. Forcing her courage up to its highest point she entered, and for a second's time was almost alone in the room with Tyrone.

His back was turned, for he was writing at a desk on which a lamp stood, and which was placed against the wall between the fireplace and one of the windows. He looked round in an instant and saw her standing silent and motionless. Her veil was down, and for a moment he was not certain who his visitor might be. Then, gathering up what calmness and courage she could, she began, "Mr. Tyrone," and then stopped.

"Jennie!"—oh, how the word and the tone thrilled through her!—"Miss Aspar!"

Theodore luckily came to the rescue.

"You see, Tyrone, what visitors *I* bring you! I found Miss Aspar just in the act of knocking at the door, and of course I took her under my charge. Now I'll just go for a moment and look after my trunk, you know, and that sort of thing."

"Don't go, Theodore!" said Jennie, faintly. "Stay here, please."

But he had not heard her probably, for he had already disappeared.

Tyrone, with almost mechanical politeness, offered Jennie a chair. She shook her head.

"You are surprised to see *me* here, Mr. Tyrone," she began, in a low voice.

"I am surprised," he replied, and his look showed it.

"You will think me unwomanly and unladylike perhaps," she went on with increasing courage, and perhaps returning bitterness. "Let it be so; I don't care. I shouldn't be here at such a time—or at all—if I cared what people said of me! I have come for your sake, not mine. Mr. Tyrone, you are going to Ireland to-night?"

"I am going to Ireland, certainly," he replied, keeping his eyes lowered so that they could not meet hers.

"Don't go! I beg of you not to go! Oh, take my advice, whatever you may think of me! I know what I'm talking of; it is not folly or nonsense or fatalism; but don't go! Some harm will happen if you go."

"There is no danger of any kind," said Tyrone, "and there certainly could be none that you could know."

"There is, Mr. Tyrone, I assure you there is! I can't tell you how or what I know, but I do know. I have heard——"

"From whom, Miss Aspar?" he asked, coldly.

"I can't tell you that," and a rush of crimson passed over her face. "I can't tell you anything," she said, impetuously, "but that I know there's danger to you—danger is meditated and planned if you go to Ireland. Do you think I would have come here to-night for nothing—on a meaningless errand? Think for a moment what this may cost me, and then say whether my words are worth listening to!"

"I am sorry," Tyrone said, "deeply sorry if any kind intention towards me cost you any annoyance, Miss Aspar. I am sure no one will or can misinterpret your good nature. But I feel sure you make some mistake. There is no possible danger to me; and even if there were I could not stand back because of such a chance. I thank you a thousand times for your kindness—it surprises and—and—overwhelms me—but there is no danger."

"You have enemies who are determined——"

Tyrone's eyebrows contracted and his cheek grew red.

"I have enemies, no doubt—everybody has, I suppose—but I can't think of any from whom any treachery is to be feared."

"Can't you? *I* can." And then she suddenly checked herself and panted.

"Miss Aspar," he said, coldly, "I am not afraid of any enemy, treacherous or not, and no warning, however kind, can keep a man back from doing what he has to do. Perhaps I can guess at the enemy you mean."

"Then don't guess—don't'!" she exclaimed. "If I have said too much already, oh, please forget it! I have only done a foolish thing, and for no good. Oh, why did I come here?"

"Why did you come here?" Tyrone repeated, vehemently, and breaking loose from the bonds of cold and formal courtesy in which he had restrained himself. "Why did you come here, Jennie? To torture me with a face and a voice that I only wished never to see and hear again? What folly, what cruel caprice, brought you here? Did you come to find out whether I was crushed by disappointment? Did you come to triumph over me? Had you not fooled me long enough before, when I thought you the purest and most single-minded and truthful being on all the earth? Why did you come here now?"

"I came to save you from danger that threatens you—I know it does. I tell you it does. I came because I am a half mad girl, Tyrone, and because I loved you"—he waved his hands with a quick, scornful gesture, as if to sweep away all protestations such as that—"because I loved you! Heaven only knows how much I loved you! You will never, never again be loved so well. Oh, God forgive me, I love you still! There—now you know why I came to try to serve you, and now I can only go away."

She was turning to leave the room, when he said—

"Stay, Jennie, Miss Aspar, one moment. There is something in all this I don't understand, and I will understand it. You tell me that—you say that you still love me."

"I do. Must I say it again and again, Mr. Tyrone? Must I condemn myself and shame myself every time? I love you still—still—still! I know how cruelly you have deceived me, and I love you! I would have died for you—gladly; but that's all past. I came to serve you if I could, caring for nothing else—not for the world's opinion and not for yours. Good-bye."

"Jennie, there is something more than mere caprice or folly in all this. You were not a coquette or a woman to be won with money. Why did you break your faith with me? Why did you write that letter?"

Jennie coloured, this time angrily.

"Your own conscience," she replied, with almost a ring of scorn in her voice, "can surely tell you *that*, without any words of mine. You were my hero and my idol! Well, I found that my idol was of clay."

Tyrone still thought she spoke only of some of his past faults, too well known to nearly all the world.

"And this is all?" he said. "And we fling away our happiness for *that*. One thing, Miss Aspar, you must tell me. Were you not pressed or coerced to this? Was this done of your own free will?"

"It was, Mr. Tyrone," she answered, firmly. "No one coerced me or tried to do so. I never consulted anyone; I saw what I must do. You were no longer what I once believed. I loved you still; but that's nothing."

"Nothing, indeed!" he said, with scornful emphasis. And then again he asked—with his eyes fixed on her—"And you did of your own free will consent to marry that man—Quentin?" He brought out the name with a spasm.

In a low but firm voice Jennie said, "I did."

"Then," Tyrone exclaimed, "I tell you that you are unworthy even of me, or of any sacrifice that any man could make, and I will only try to blot you from my memory for ever!"

She drew back as if she had received a blow, and with tears filling her eyes she was turning silently away. But his manner suddenly changed, and again he stopped her.

"One moment, Jennie. Are you indeed going in this way? Is it all really over? Have you left me? Are you trifling away both our lives? Are you still the Jennie Aspar I used to know?"

"Oh no!"—and her tears came freely—"I am not; for she was proud and happy, while I am only shamed and miserable."

"Did you really come here only to tell me of some imaginary danger? Do you think my life is so delightful that I should care so much about preserving it? Have you nothing else to say to me, Jennie, nothing?"

"Nothing," said Jennie, with a wan smile. "There is no

more that remains to be said between us two. Any words would be useless now, indeed, Mr. Tyrone. I beseech you once again not to go to Ireland, and I pray for you."

"Jennie," he cried, "let there be an end of all this! You say that you still love me, and I am almost ashamed, after what has passed, to confess how much I love you. I'll not let you go in this way. Let the past be all past. You shall not marry that fellow, so unworthy of you. Forgive me and I will forgive you. Trust yourself to me. You shall never leave this house——"

In the momentary fervour of his emotion he endeavoured to hold her round the waist.

She drew herself suddenly away.

"This house!" she exclaimed. "This house! It only needed that insult to prove to me how just they were who condemned you. No, you never loved me as I would have been loved. I now see the value of your love and of your honour, and when I trusted myself here now I was only more mad than ever."

Tyrone drew back far away and stood silent.

Theodore, who had knocked at the door once or twice unheard, now entered the room and for a moment stood bewildered and scared.

"Time's up, Tyrone," he said, at last, in a very tremulous and stammering voice. "Cab at the door, and trunk up. Not ten minutes to spare."

"Still, Mr. Tyrone, don't go," Jennie said, turning pale. "Once more I ask you, for the last time, don't go!"

"I am much obliged, Miss Aspar," he said, coldly, for her last repulse had been too bitter to be ignored; "but there is no danger." Then, to Madame Pinel, who appeared on the threshold, and who had not had the faintest suspicion that any woman was in the room, "Will you see that one of the servants goes home with Miss Aspar in a cab? My friend Theodore here met her by chance in the rain, and insisted on finding shelter for her here. Her family and I are old and intimate friends. You will excuse my rude flight, Miss Aspar; the express would not wait even for an American citizen like Theodore here. Madame Pinel will take care of you until the storm abates. My kind regards to your family. Good-night."

Jennie stood silent and motionless. She did not venture to raise her eyes. She was shamed to her very heart. The

manner in which Tyrone, with parting courtesy and thoughtfulness, had endeavoured to shelter her from the suspicions of unwomanly boldness which her rash escapade might have brought upon her, only bore a harder testimony to the imprudence of her conduct. In her excitement she had misinterpreted some of Tyrone's former words, and she believed, with burning forhead, that he too despised her for her conduct and sought to take advantage of her unselfish heedlessness. She silently stood there a living picture of unmerited shame, like some captive girl exhibited to scorn in the market-place, unable to raise her eyes beneath the disgrace which yet she knows that she has not deserved.

"Good-bye, Jennie," said Theodore, very sadly, as he took her hand. She bent down a moment as if in the impulse to kiss his forehead, but drew back, and only replied to his grasp by a faint pressure and a half audible word.

She stood with her arms straight down and her fingers interlaced and working spasmodically, as if she were endeavouring to wrestle with the sense of some physical pain. Looking up she became aware of the dark eyes of Madame Pinel turned coldly and curiously upon her, and she blushed to the roots of her hair.

"Hadn't I better send for a cab, Miss?" said Johanna, in a voice that gave no tone of sympathy.

"No, thanks," said Jennie; "I had rather walk."

"Indeed! The night's pouring with rain."

This piece of information was given very drily, and as if Johanna meant to say that to an ordinary person it must be conclusive, but that to a young lady so eccentric as Miss Aspar it might probably seem of no account.

Jennie meanwhile hardly knew what she said, or whether she had said anything at all. She was now only anxious to get out of the house and from under the eyes of this woman. In truth Madame's Pinel's manner was not encouraging nor her look friendly. Her dislike to Jennie was of a paradoxical and contradictory kind. She disliked her first because she had tried, as Johanna assumed, to marry Tyrone, and next because she had, as Johanna likewise assumed, made her young hero unhappy by refusing to marry him. The first step augured great self-conceit indeed, Johanna thought, but the second showed outrageous assurance—the like of *her* to refuse a Tyrone! But now there was a third feeling or dislike, for she regarded Jennie's appearance there as a piece

of scandalous impropriety, and Johanna was without any pardon for a lack of propriety in women. She had, moreover, that rigid and unconquerable conviction which exists in the honest breasts of nearly all uneducated Irishwomen—the conviction that the morals of the women of other nations are decidedly shaky and never to be trusted.

So she stood frigidly regarding Jennie, and obviously waiting for her to go.

"Oh, why did I come here?" Jennie exclaimed, passionately tearing asunder her interlaced hands and moving at last from the spot where she had stood so long.

"Indeed then, Miss, I think ye'd much better have stayed at home. You have no mother, I daresay?"

"I came to serve *him!*" Jennie said, flashing all the light of her angry eyes upon the undaunted Johanna. "I came to warn him against enemies. What do I care what any one thinks of me, if I could serve *him?* Let me out, please."

She walked steadily towards the door. Johanna was a little touched by her words and rather admired her spirit.

"Still, Miss, you'd much better be at home than trying to serve gentlemen that don't want friends anyhow. But I'll send for a cab; you mustn't go out in that rain, and one of the girls shall go with you. No, she shan't, though; these girls have tongues that never stop. I'll go with you myself; Tyrone as good as told me."

Jennie, however, was hurrying downstairs, unheeding this offer, when, as she came near the hall-floor, she saw a child come out of a room and stand in the hall looking up at her with open blue Celtic eyes. Jennie was seized with a sudden tremor and turned pale. But she advanced to the child and knelt on the floor before her, and gazed into the little girl's face half in pity, half in pain.

"Oh, you poor unhappy little child!" Jennie almost sobbed out, with a bursting heart. "God forgive me if I can't feel kind to you, for your life is likely to be more wretched even than my own!"

Johanna stood on the step just above our heroine with a lamp in her hand. She was greatly touched by Jennie's attitude to the child; the words she could not hear, but her heart warmed towards the unhappy young woman.

"Take her away, please!" said Jennie, as Madame Pinel came down. "I can't endure to look at her, though my heart bleeds for her!"

Madame Pinel opened the door of the little parlour. "Go in, Mattie," she said, and the sad and taciturn little creature obeyed. "Hers is a sad story, sure enough," she said; "she's lost her father already, and now I fear she's going to lose her mother too."

"Lost her father?" Jennie said, staring in bewilderment at Madame Pinel. "Her father?"

"Yes, sure enough. But speak easy, Miss, if you please; the creature doesn't know the father's dead and buried. God help her! Sure she must know it all soon, if the poor mother goes too."

"In the name of Heaven," Jennie asked, catching Johanna by the arm, "tell me what you mean—*who* is that child?"

"Only a poor little orphan thing, a daughter of a poor lost creature of the family of Tyrone—sure if she hasn't the Tyrone eye and chin to the very life!—that *my* Tyrone here found and took care of, for the love of God and the sake of the grand old name."

"Is this true?" Jennie passionately asked. "I beseech of you—I implore of you—don't deceive me!"

"What for should I deceive you, Miss? Why, there's no mystery about it. And didn't he ever tell you? Well, well; but isn't that like him now? No; if he did anything bad he'd let it out fast enough, but his good deeds'll never be made known through *him*." There were tears in good Johanna's kindly eyes.

"Oh, what a fool and wretch I have been!" Jennie cried out. "Oh, my love, my love, Tyrone!"

And she flung herself down there on the floor, in such a choking agony of grief and remorse that the tender-hearted Johanna, though not knowing anything of what it was all about, was overwhelmed with alarm and pity, and knelt on the floor and took the unhappy girl's head in her lap and tried to soothe her, and made tender little pathetic sounds over her as if she had been a child.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Colonel Quentin came to Mr. Prinker's that evening in a wretchedly depressed and excitable mood. He had had several vexations in the day. There was the unfortunate scene with Jennie, in which he feared that he had betrayed himself. There was an exceedingly cold reception he had had at the American Legation, which seemed to him, he could not tell why, to amount to an intimation that his financial game was what Macan would have described as "about played." There was the hanging fire of the Fenian outbreak, for he had now come to rest his hopes on the rebellion being prematurely forced on, and thus all the claims of its promoters against him sponged out by a grand collapse of the whole affair. There was the conviction that he had been muddling away the business with which he was entrusted, while attending to his love affair and his own personal schemes and dreams. He had always looked forward to opening up a new career on marrying Jennie—to leading from that hour an open, unselfish, and honourable life. But to gain his end he had only been sinking deeper and deeper in complicated meanness. He began to curse himself for having plunged into that fatal love affair with a girl who he knew disliked him now more than ever she had done before; but he could no more tear that passion from his heart than he could change his nature. It had swallowed all the rest. He could not think of the possibility of a future without her.

That day he had received from America remittances to the amount of some five thousand pounds. There were not more claims against him in England than two thousand pounds would pay. If he could tide over a few months with his mining agency all might go well, and meantime he might shake himself free from every responsibility, marry Jennie, and take her out to the United States. Everything was now with him only a question of tiding over a time, for there was a fortune awaiting him if only Tyrone, whom he so hated, would marry, or get entangled in rebellion, or get killed—the latter would be best of all. One of these three things would very likely happen. Meanwhile, if Quentin could marry and take Jennie with him across the ocean, all might begin to go well with him; he might leave every memory of meanness and treachery behind him and begin his new life,

which he vowed and swore should be that of honour and credit. Now three thousand pounds would tide him over—would give him, at all events, one brilliant year of married life, during which time anything might happen—and he actually had the three thousand pounds. As if, however, Fate herself was set against him, that very day came a secret telegram from Macan, couched in commonplaces prearranged, to say that the great *coup* was to be made in a fortnight, and that the money would be required in ten days. Other hints and explanations followed.

The blood rushed to Quentin's head and his temples throbbed as if a little steam-engine were pulsating within them, and he could hardly see for a moment or two. If he gave up this money what was to become of him? Prinker must then learn his desperate condition, his gamester projects, and all would be over. If he did not give it up, a Fenian rebel, supposing he escaped alive, could hardly sue him in an English court of law for funds deposited to promote rebellion. Who would believe such a story? How could it be proved, supposing it ever could come to trial? But if Macan did not receive the money in time, might he not put off his next move and send some secret agent to find out Quentin? That seemed only too probable. One thing only could save him. Suppose the rebellion should break out prematurely, several days before the time announced by Macan? It would be crushed, Macan killed or taken prisoner, the whole thing exploded, and even the survivors, supposing them free and in a position to put the question, could never tell or prove whether the money deposited with Quentin had or had not been fairly sent and applied to its purpose. Only Macan himself knew the full story of Quentin's connexion with the affair; for Quentin had always stipulated that his private career should not be too deeply compromised, and had but lately pointed out that it was essential to the success of the movement to have some safe and free agent outside it.

It was now three o'clock; Quentin was to dine at Prinker's at eight. It was understood that the day of his marriage was then to be fixed and all the final arrangements made. The crisis was one of terrible import. What if, just to redeem all, he were to plunge one step lower down into darkness a moment before returning into full light? Success would be certain. Six sentences properly put and conveyed to the

right quarter would almost infallibly cause the rebellion to burst up prematurely and lead to the capture or death of all the leaders. Macan, he knew, was pledged to a fight, and would risk his own life a dozen times over rather than be taken without having done anything. A fearful temptation, the greatest of all his life, now beset Philip Quentin. He had done some bad things, but he had never thought of the possibility of such a deed as this before. His head throbbed more heavily than ever and there was a strange rushing in his ears, and he saw myriads of small black spots dancing before his eyes.

At last he decided, and, lest he should change his mind, he took his action promptly. Some hours after he stood in Mrs. Prinker's drawing-room.

At first he thought it was the reflection of his own agitation which showed itself in the faces of his host and hostess. But Alicia told him, with ill-suppressed uneasiness, that Jennie was out somewhere, that she could not find her. Even this seemingly unimportant fact looked ominous to Quentin and startled him. When half an hour passed over Mrs. Prinker went out of the room to look for her sister again. The two men stood by the fire-place and only exchanged a few words. Quentin was in no humour for conversation. He looked up eagerly when Alicia re-entered the room.

"I don't know what to make of it," Mrs. Prinker said, with a scared face. "She certainly isn't in her room nor anywhere in the house now."

Colonel Quentin positively trembled with excitement. His quick nervous temperament thrilled through with vague feelings of alarm and jealousy and anger.

"She doesn't usually go out at this time, in this sort of way?" he asked, and he moistened his hot lips with his tongue.

"Oh no, never. I never knew her to do such a thing before. Then the weather!"

"It is a bad night," Mr. Prinker said, peering out of the window, "and streaming with rain. My dear, I think your sister must be somewhere in the house."

"But no, Prinker, I assure you she is not anywhere in the house."

"Mayn't she have gone to see somebody?"

"But to stay out so long! half-past eight o'clock. Where could she be?"

"When did you see her last?" asked Quentin, almost savagely.

"Oh, hours ago. She hides herself in her own room, you know, a great deal of late, and she doesn't like anyone going near her. She has changed so much these last few days."

Quentin thrust his hands deep into his pockets and closed his teeth hard. Mrs. Prinker's words were shooting through him like the pangs of a reopened wound.

"Have you noticed anything very strange about her lately?" Mr. Prinker asked, in a tone that showed how seriously alarmed he was becoming. "Anything decidedly very strange, Alicia?"

"No, dear, nothing very strange. Jennie was always rather an odd sort of girl, you know, not like other girls much; but I haven't lately observed anything very peculiar, not very."

Quentin felt as if their eyes must involuntarily be turning upon him, as if he were the cause of the whole confusion.

"The one important question," he said, "is where is she now?" Occurrences of that day and of days before came to the aid of the suspicions that were passing through his mind.

The question was quickly answered. A knocking was heard at the door. The three suddenly grew silent and looked at each other, waiting. In a moment a light, quick step was heard outside and Jennie Aspar entered the room. She had thrown off her dripping shawl, but the rain yet stood upon the tossed and blown feathers of her hat, and her face glowed with the effects of the wind, and still more of her own emotions. She was panting and excited. Quentin did not step forward to meet her. Instinctively he knew that something decisive had happened.

"Oh, Jennie," said Alicia, in a tone as near to exclamation as she could well indulge, "how you have alarmed us! Where have you been?"

Jennie lifted off her hat and smoothed and stroked down its feathers as if her whole heart were engrossed in its preservation. She was only composing herself to speak, but for the moment Mr. Prinker almost thought that she was really mad. Then she looked up with lighting eyes and asked—

"Do you all really wish to hear where I have been?"

Alicia only spoke.

"Well, Jennie, of course we were all a little uneasy and alarmed, not knowing; and Colonel Quentin——"

"I have been to see Mr. Tyrone, and I have seen him."

Mr. Prinker became aghast; Alicia turned pale; Colonel

Quentin alone maintained a dogged composure. He knew now that all was over.

"Yes," said Jennie, warming under the influence of her own words, "I have seen Mr. Tyrone and spoken with him, and I know all! I know how unworthy of him I have been and how deceived I was, and what a miserable fool and dupe I was. And I know how he despises me and how I love him!"

"Oh!" interposed Alicia, "pray don't listen to her—pray don't! She doesn't know what she is saying."

"I do, Alicia; I know quite well, and Colonel Quentin knows. Ask *him*. I have been the victim of a shameful plot—a conspiracy! Oh, what a fool I was to be deceived by it and to lose *him*. Oh, how could you all be so cruel—to come between him and me when you knew that I loved him more than anything in the world?"

If two of the three had actually been conspirators they could hardly have stood more bewildered and abashed than they did. The vehemence and passion of the excited girl seemed to stupefy them. Mr. Prinker first recovered his command of words.

"You are—ah—a little excited, Jennie; and perhaps if you went to your room and, you know, took a little rest, and, in fact, composed yourself—— You know, my dear, your sister and I only act for your good, and we don't know anything of plots and conspiracies. Such words don't apply to *us*."

"But that story of Mr. Tyrone is not true; every word of it is false. Oh, I have only just learned the whole truth!"

"From him?" Quentin asked, bitterly, and speaking for the first time.

"Not from him, Colonel Quentin," Jennie answered, turning a look of quiet scorn on him; "not from him. When I saw him I still believed the falsehood, and I only went there to save him—to warn him against *you*. Yes, against you; because you are plotting now against his life, and because I love him! But I found it out after he had gone. Alicia, dear, may I speak two words to Colonel Quentin, please; only a few words, alone? He is to be my husband, you know, dear, and I may speak with him."

Mr. Prinker was only too glad to get away on any terms. "Do you think your sister is at all out of her senses?" he asked of his wife, as they left the room. "I don't understand this." Probably for the moment he wished himself unmarried again. Meantime both he and Alicia knew that the dinner must

be all spoiled, and that the servants must be wondering what was going on.

Colonel Quentin and Jennie were left alone. He stood with his back to the fire-place, looking down, sullen and savage.

"Colonel Quentin!"

He looked up, with a kind of imploring glance first, and then with an air of defiance.

"Need I tell you," Jennie went on, "that I never will marry you! Never, never! I don't care what promise I have made. I hope, after what you have heard just now, that you would never marry *me*."

"You needn't tell me," he said, doggedly, "that you care more about *him*. I know all that. I know that you have disgraced yourself in the eyes of the world by what you have done to-night; yet I don't care. I am ready to forget all that. I love you, and you have promised me."

"Once for all, Colonel Quentin, I will never marry you. I will sooner kill myself; a thousand times sooner! I have found out your plot to-night."

He started, and scanned her face; then he said—

"There was no plot. I know what you mean, of course, now. I heard of it, as you did, and I believed it."

"Yes, but it was you who set on the whole thing, and you knew days ago the full truth—you did, Colonel Quentin! I know all your schemes now against him and me. I know that you want to get money, which he doesn't care for. Oh, was ever an unhappy girl so surrounded by deceit! He only was true and noble, and I was false to him and had no faith in him."

"Jennie, I confess it," said Quentin, with a great despairing burst. "I did help lately to keep the truth from you. But it was only because I loved you so much—you can't know how I loved you. *He* isn't capable of such feelings. Have pity on me and forgive me! I always meant to act an honourable part to *you*. Women ought not to be too hard upon the sins of love."

He tried to touch her, but she recoiled quickly.

"Love! Do you call that love? To make a girl miserable for her life! To come between her and the man she truly loved and cheat and deceive her! If I were a man I would scorn to call such a thing love. I would be ashamed to touch the hand of a woman on such terms as that. Colonel Quentin,

I always liked you before you talked of love. Something lately made me draw back from you—some instinct. I didn't know then; I know now. I thank Heaven for having saved me from such a man! Colonel Quentin, I despise you and I hate you."

"It will be the worse for *him*," Quentin began, with a ferocious glare in his eyes.

"Heaven will take care of him," said Jennie, "although I am nothing more to him. Do your worst, Colonel Quentin. No power on earth shall ever make me speak to you more."

She went out of the room without looking at him. He never saw her again.

Quentin passed downstairs without disturbing Mr. and Mrs. Prinker. He had gone long before they knew it. Their dinner was a late tête-à-tête—a very much spoiled dinner and very dismal. Alicia feared that her husband would blame *her* for the disturbance brought upon his house, which, however, he did not, but was only wondering whether Jennie had really gone mad, and what, under the circumstances, poor Quentin had better do. "Mad or not," he said, to himself, "it's a deuce of a business, that visit to Tyrone." But he would not say a word on this subject to his wife.

Alicia was a little angry with Jennie and did not go near her for some time. When at last she entered her room Jennie's mood of excitement had given way and she was in tears. Loneliness and suffering had softened the poor girl's temper and she welcomed her sister's coming. "Alicia, my sister," she said, imploringly, "don't leave me quite alone in all the world! Tell me—oh, tell me—that you knew nothing of this wicked plot to separate him and me!"

It was then Alicia learned for the first time that there was a plot, and that she had herself been innocently one of its leading instruments. She was shocked a little at first and wondered how people could do such things, and was surprised to think that a lady like Mrs. Lorn could be so mean; but of course Colonel Quentin knew nothing about it. How would Colonel Quentin take all this? Jennie was too low-spirited to notice that Alicia did not seem to care so much about the discovery of the plot as about what Colonel Quentin and people in general would think of Jennie's visit to Tyrone. This was in Mrs. Prinker's eye the grand and awful fact of the situation, overshadowing and dwarfing all the others. She could hardly think of anything else. She was very kind

and gentle to Jennie and pitied her much, and tried to soothe her; but the impression had now forced itself on Alicia's mind that her sister was a terrible girl to deal with, an unmanageable girl, who could only be counted on to do the wrong sort of thing under any given circumstances. Had poor Jennie been less broken down by the reaction from her recent excitement she must have observed that the kindness which Alicia showed to her was only of that nature which philanthropic and Christian people commonly bestow upon a sinner.

After a time Alicia left her and told the whole story of Jennie's discovery to Mr. Prinker. But so shrewd a man of the world was not to be deceived by such a tale as that. Oh no! Didn't Alicia see? But of course she didn't see—couldn't be expected to see! English ladies were not likely to look far into things like that. But the thing would not hold water for a moment. It wouldn't stand any examination. Absurd, you know! Two Maurice Tyrones in the same house, and nobody ever to have heard of it! And Carpenter—look at Carpenter, who saw that fellow with the woman long ago! The supposed explanation and conspiracy, and all that, was all nonsense. That Irishwoman, of course, would say anything. It was all only some rubbish trumped up to deceive a foolish and excitable girl. "As the man said in that play—at the Haymarket, wasn't it?—it's very nice, but it wont wash! I don't like Mrs. Lorn much, Alicia; she wants ballast I should say; too fond of using her eyes, and all that; but depend upon it she's right enough in this business, right enough."

Alicia was easily persuaded to accept this view of the matter; indeed, Mr. Prinker proved it by the clearest argument.

"I do wish she hadn't gone there," Mrs. Prinker said, looking at the fire and speaking in a tone of genuine distress. "She's such a strange and wild girl! If she would only consult people; but when she once takes a project into her head—— What *will* people say?"

Mr. Prinker shook his head. He didn't like to tell his wife what he feared people would say.

"I wonder how Colonel Quentin feels," Alicia said, despondently.

"I tell you what, my dear," Prinker answered, screwing up his courage to make a painful announcement, "I shouldn't

be surprised, you know, after what has happened and what people must say—must say, you know—if Quentin were to draw out of the affair altogether."

"Oh, Robert, dear, do you really think that?"

"Well, yes, Alicia, I fear so. You know there would be a good deal to be said on his side of the question. Men don't like to marry—I mean people will think her conduct very indiscreet and wanting in propriety, and so on. He went away very abruptly; and, of course, he felt it deeply, depend upon that. It's very awkward, Alicia; but really, my dear, your sister has brought it upon herself, and I shouldn't wonder if she had seen the last of Quentin this night."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

The storm of wind had blown away the rain when Colonel Quentin came out of Mr. Prinker's house that night. The pavements were swept nearly dry, though the pools of water in the middle-way still glittered livid under the wan moonlight. There was something like a feeling of satisfaction in Quentin's mind at the condition of the weather. It seemed as though it were expressly gotten up to be in sympathy with him, and to be a fitting framework for his passion and his despair. He turned back and looked up at the house, knowing he should never cross its threshold again; for he saw, as clearly as he saw that wild sad moonlight, that Jennie Aspar and Tyrone would come together again; that his love and all his efforts to separate them would only draw them more quickly and more closely to each other. He had staked everything that day upon one last desperate throw, and he had lost. Some fearful words of Shakspeare kept ringing in his ears, "Oh, I were damned beyond all depth in hell, but that—" and in his case there was no "but" to qualify the self-pronounced doom.

He went straight from Mr. Prinker's to Tyrone's lodging. His first anxiety seemed to be to learn exactly who were the tenants of it, for though he had known long since that the story used against Tyrone was not true he had made no further inquiry, caring little what particular artifice Mrs. Lorn might have thought proper to use, or what tale she might have invented, provided only that it served his purpose. But the fact that Jennie had learned something conclusive

and crushing to him by merely visiting Tyrone's house drove into his mind the conviction that there was some secret there of which he knew nothing as yet, and which would overmaster all he could attempt against the revelation. So he had kept almost silent under Jennie's words, not knowing what it was against which he had to defend himself. He went directly to Tyrone's lodgings, determined to find out all from some one—Tyrone or anybody else—he knew not whom or how.

Tyrone was gone. Quentin had no difficulty in seeing Madame Pinel, for he professed to have important business, and he had been with Tyrone there before, and she knew his name. Colonel Quentin's last effort at composure and self-restraint was occupied in the task of extracting from Johanna some rays of light to fall on what he had heard, and he had no difficulty. He soon found that a second Maurice Tyrone had been in London, and had died there, and that his wife and child were still under that very roof. He needed no more to know that the dead man was the son of the New York Tyrone for whose property he had been so long scheming. With this knowledge came the conviction that these people must have known him all through, that they were in league against him, that Tyrone from first to last was in possession of his whole story—the story of his birth, the knowledge of his purpose; that all these eyes were quietly looking over the cards he thought he was so securely holding up, and so cleverly playing. In all this, of course, he was mistaken Tyrone's carelessness had always prevented him from taking the trouble to find out anything. But Quentin left Clarges Street with the conviction that the living Tyrone and the wife of the dead one had been in full possession of his identity and his schemes all throughout, and were coolly playing together against him. He saw himself then, not merely a disappointed and ruined man, but a befooled and ridiculous dupe.

He wandered about the street that night he hardly knew how long. He lounged into a theatre and saw some comedy going on, and when the people near him laughed he laughed louder than any one, then got up suddenly and went away. He strolled into the Haymarket, and met some people whom he knew, and they supped together and were very noisy, and Quentin drank a great deal and quarrelled with somebody and struck him, and was struck in return by a hand which had a diamond ring on it, and which cut him on the cheek,

and then they were separated somehow. Afterwards he played billiards somewhere and won a good deal of money in betting, and then the whole night faded away into wild and senseless dissipation, and he did not return to his own lodgings until late in the morning. He went to bed and slept for some hours.

When he awoke he was still confused and half oblivious; but he had a bath and dressed himself with care. He observed the mark under his eye, and said aloud to himself that it was one of the old scars got near Richmond.

Selina Lorn was sitting rather languidly and out of spirits alone in her favourite room that day when Colonel Quentin, unannounced, entered and stood before her.

"Colonel Quentin! Philip—I didn't expect——"

He laughed an odd sort of laugh and said—

"You don't know what I've come for, Mrs. Lorn. I've come with a proposal."

"A proposal, Philip? What sort of a proposal?"

"Proposal of marriage, my dear; what other sort of proposal is a woman supposed to care for?"

"I don't quite understand this, Colonel Quentin," Selina said, coldly, and she rose to ring the bell.

"Don't ring the bell, Mrs. Lorn. Hear me out first. I ask you to marry me, adored Selina! We were made for each other, noblest of women! We are a pair of broken-down rakes and detected conspirators."

"Colonel Quentin, if I had any friend or gentleman whatever near, you dared not intrude on me to insult me. Are you mad?"

"Faith, I begin to think so," he answered, with a light laugh; "but I am sane enough yet, Mrs. Lorn, to know that you and I are in one boat; that you are cast off and thrown over as well as I; that our two rivals, my sweet accomplice, will marry and laugh at us; that we have both made fools of ourselves; and that it's a sad pity to spoil two houses with us. Queen of my soul, will you return to your old lover, whom you were so fond of once?"

Mrs. Lorn turned lividly pale. The poor woman began to think she had to deal with a maniac. She thought it was her best policy to humour him.

"Why do you talk so strangely to me, Philip?" she said, in her gentlest voice. "I am not ashamed of having been fond of you: I esteem you still. I am much attached to you.

If you have been disappointed I am sorry, very sorry for you. Am not I disappointed too?"

"Don't I say so, my angel? Don't I know that he wont have you, and that she wont have me? Well, then, what can we do better than to console ourselves by becoming man and wife? I think it is written in the stars. We are so well suited; both such shabby plotters and such blundering dupes."

"Philip, dear Philip, I am afraid you are not well, not quite yourself. I hardly know you."

"Hardly? You don't know me. My name isn't Quentin, child, any more than yours is——Truth let us say. My reputed father was a mean white; a saddler, dear, down in Dixie's Land; what of that? Old Lorn of New York was not much of an aristocrat. At least let me kiss your hand, dear lady, sweet First Love, to whom I owe so much."

He put out his hand to take hers. She did not dare to refuse; she was trembling all over. He took her white hand, made as if he were about to raise it to his lips, then threw it rudely away from him, broke into a loud laugh, and left the room. Selina, terrified, rang for her maid, and took good care not to be alone again.

This singular interview seemed to bring Quentin a little to himself. He grew apparently more collected and ashamed of his extravagances. He went home, and opening one of his trunks, took out his American uniform, the uniform belonging to his rank in the army, and spread it on a sofa, and contemplated it for a long time in silence. "I shall never put *that* on again," he said, aloud. "I have disgraced it." Then he jumped up and exclaimed, "I'll never go back to New York, never!"

The name of New York set him thinking in his wandering way of Macan, and of his own treachery. He hid his face in his hands for several minutes; then suddenly he looked up with a kind of purpose apparently brightening within him. "That's it," he exclaimed. "It's not too late! I'll die with him, and he'll never know that he has any cause to be ashamed of me! There will be something in that."

The unfortunate man was evidently animated by some sort of purpose. His ways became once again somewhat clear and methodical. He put up his American uniform carefully and reverently, and gazed over it for awhile as he deposited it in the trunk, as we might survey the dead body

of some dear one sinking with its coffin into the grave. He thought of the love and pride and ambition with which he had first put on the uniform of the American officer; of the triumph he felt in the faith that he had conquered a bright and brave career for himself away from the ignominy of his name and his birth and his early base associations; and of the hopes that seemed then to open so fair before him.

"Well," he said, springing up from the kneeling posture in which he had been stooping over the trunk, "let them say what they will, I never disgraced that uniform while I wore it! I did my duty anyhow while that coat was on my back, and I'll never degrade it by putting it on again!"

Colonel Quentin drove about town very composedly for an hour or two, making arrangements for the conversion of bills and drafts into Bank of England notes. Much of his wildness of the morning had been doubtless the effect of the strange night he had spent, for people who saw him during the later part of the day noticed nothing particular in his manner, except that he seemed in higher spirits perhaps than usual. That evening he told the servants at his lodgings that he was leaving town for a few days, and he was driven to the Euston Square Station about half-past eight. He only carried as baggage a small valise, which was put in the carriage with him. When he came on the platform he saw on the bills of the late editions of the evening journals something about Fenianism in Ireland, and he hastily bought a paper and opened it, and ran it over under a lamp; but it contained nothing of any importance, only a vague rumour that a Fenian rising was expected in Ireland, and that the Government was taking every possible precaution.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The election was over, and Tyrone was defeated. In his own county and among his own people a stranger had defeated him. He felt terribly disappointed, for everything of late had seemed to go against him. The wrath of little Theodore (who had immensely enjoyed all the stormy scenes of the hustings and the polling) was unbounded, and he went about protesting that the Irish were the most ungrateful people in the world. His presence and his extravagance did our hero some good, for they kept him from brooding over his discom-

fiture, and by compelling him to stand up in the defence of his countrymen, compelled him to believe at last that there was something to be said for them.

Still the blow was a heavy one; and one of its results seemed likely to be a necessary re-shaping of his life. "I have done with politics," he thought to himself; "that dream is over; the Irish chief's part is done. I have faithfully tried to serve my country, and a few empty words and false promises from an ambitious English lawyer are enough to destroy my claims." So he went on, meditating in the immemorial fashion of disappointment. But his disappointment was twofold and subtly interwoven. There was not a political pang he felt which was not embittered beyond measure by his wounded love. Ireland and Jennie Aspar had stabbed him at the same time, he thought, with the keen egotism which may be pardoned to the disappointed, especially when, like Tyrone, they have the courage not to show how heavily they have been hurt. Celt as he was, Tyrone kept his emotions to himself, and no one of those around him knew how he felt.

Two things he pondered on chiefly—whether to study for the English bar and try patiently to get on there, or to go out to the United States. Meanwhile he had to show Theodore a little of the country, unpropitious as the winter and the weeping skies were; and they therefore made a few excursions here and there. It was in the midst of this desperate effort at hospitality and enjoyment that a great event, or something that was meant for a great event, took place.

The long expected Fenian rebellion broke out. The landing of American sympathizers, which had been vaguely expected for months, was made at last. It was over in a moment. The news which told of the outbreak told also of the repression. By some means or other the authorities had suddenly learned the exact spot where the attempt was to be made, and were able to be ready for it, and to crush it out of hand. It was only an affair of the police altogether. A few volleys from police carbines, a few Fenians shot dead, a few taken prisoners, a good many escaped, and the thing was over. Tyrone could not learn whether any prominent American or other foreign sympathizer had been captured, but it was positively asserted that several such had been seen among the unfortunate men who so vainly displayed the Irish flag.

The air of course was still thick with rumours of other outbreaks and other landings; but Tyrone at least felt satisfied that the great *coup* had been made, and that the rebellion was over, for that time. He could only feel glad to think that it had not, after all, been as terrible a waste of life as it might have been.

Tyrone had promised Theodore that they would visit the ruin which was once the castle of his ancestors. It was under present circumstances a particularly lugubrious and even funereal sort of visitation; but our hero resolved to go through with it, and exercise the rites of hospitality to the bitter end. He and his young companion travelled to the little town near which the castle stood. But the day when they arrived there was one of unceasing rain, and the next day was one of rain and cold, and they could not venture out. The residents of that town had been on Tyrone's side all through, and they gave him, despite the rain, a joyous reception, which immensely pleased Theodore.

The next day, though wan and wild, promised better. Tyrone was standing at the inn door, shortly after noon, when a big man, in the ordinary ragged garb of the south-western Irish peasant, came up to him, and in a mysterious sort of way handed him a very soiled and muddy envelope without any address, which he asked him to read to himself. Tyrone opened the envelope, and saw inside a shabby piece of paper inscribed in a bold and familiar hand. It was the writing of General Felix Macan.

It ran thus:

"To the *Honourable* Colonel *Tyrone.*

"DEAR SIR,—High and mighty, you shall know, as Hamlet says, we are set naked upon your kingdom. In other words, we are now enjoying your hospitality without having been invited—we are sheltered, a few of us, in the old halls of the Tyrones. Will you come and exchange a word with us, seeing that we daren't go to you? I'd like to see you, Tyrone, if only to tell you what a true prophet you were. It's all over; and the one thing now that I'm most sorry for is, that Felix Macan is alive to tell it. God save Ireland—and it's as much if He can do it.

"FELIX MACAN,
"General (that was)."

Tyrone felt a throb of gladness, much as he blamed the

luckless and reckless Macan, to find that the poor fellow was not dead or a prisoner. Whether it would be possible to contrive his escape seemed doubtful enough, for there was a pretty strong force of police in the town. Tyrone knew, however, that nobody ever went near the castle except a rare tourist in the summer and autumn, and this was a specially dreary winter. The police had been centred in the town, chiefly because of the election, for this was one of the principal polling places, and they might be drawn off to-morrow or the day after. If then Macan and his companions could lie there quietly hidden for a day or two there was some chance for them. None of the peasant population would ever betray their whereabouts, and though many of the shopkeepers in the towns complained much of the disturbances caused by the Fenians, it was not likely that any of that class either would give a hint to the police. The chances of escape were all the better that the outbreak had taken place in another county, and that this had been practically undisturbed. The emissary was still lounging about near the door, as if he had no particular business there. Tyrone merely nodded to him, and said carelessly, "All right, I'll go," and the man gave a respectful pull to his hat and walked away, quickening his pace, Tyrone could see, as he gradually got out of the neighbourhood of the principal houses.

Tyrone knew that he could trust to Theodore's sense and silence, and so he told him all in a few words. This was the more necessary as he meant to make use of Theodore's desire to see the castle as an explanation of his journey thither. The rain gradually was blown away by the wind, and the rays of a pale and watery sun struggled to brighten the sullen landscape. Tyrone resolved to walk to the castle. He took with him some sandwiches in a case, and made Theodore do the same; and he brought a flask of brandy. Greater supplies he did not venture to take, lest such provisioning should attract any attention; but he hoped that when he had seen how matters stood with the fugitives, they could perhaps organize some means of getting them sufficient food.

The castle was four or five miles from the town, and the road a mere flat through a waste of spongy bog, speckled here and there with livid little pools, on which the dreary sun shone with melancholy lustre. At length they began to mount a hill: they plodded on in silence for the most part, Tyrone smoking a cigar. Just now when Theodore was not

actually excited he was usually very silent, and for such a boy almost sad. Tyrone was not inclined at the present moment for much conversation, and they ascended therefore with their eyes fixed on the clayey and crumbling steep into which the road had now converted itself. At length the path reached what seemed like the shoulder of a hill, and they could see on their right the whole of the broad landscape that stretched out there. Behind them rose faintly the smoke from the chimneys of the village. Above them, just to the left, where the brow of the hill rose, there was an old square, heavy tower or keep, its battlements and roofless walls draped in blackening ivy, and with the remains of outbuildings, ruined so as almost to defy mental reconstruction, mouldering all around it. Our travellers paused a moment involuntarily, and Theodore looked from the path on which he had hitherto kept his eyes fixed.

"Is that the castle?" asked Theodore, in a tone of disappointment.

"That is the castle," Tyrone answered. "All that's left of it."

"It's not half so large as Heidelberg," Theodore said.

"No, nor half so well furnished as Windsor, Theodore: and its roof, I think, is the same as that of Allan-a-Dale's castle."

"Yes, I know," said the boy, nodding; "that's in Sir Walter Scott. I read it out once to *her*—to a person—

> 'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
> And with all its bright spangles, quoth Allan-a-Dale.'

I say, Tyrone."

"Yes." Tyrone's eyes were fixed upon the ruin, and his thoughts were wandering.

"Why don't you go in for a rebellion? Why don't you head these fellows, and make a real fight, and be famous? I would if I were you. What matter if a fellow was killed? I don't see any great fun in living."

"Nor I, Theodore, but you ought to. When I was your age I went in for the fun of living. You are too young for such notions. You can't be quite worn out yet."

"Oh now, come, I say, a chap isn't so young as all that. Some fellows grow, you know, and I don't like some things in life. I think it would be jolly to lead a rebellion and get killed."

"Yes, but it mightn't be quite so jolly for other fellows to get killed in the same way, and all for nothing, Theodore. Hard times, my boy, when even the luxury of being killed when we like is denied us."

Tyrone looked down with a peculiar and melancholy interest upon the face of the boy. There was a premature thoughtfulness about Theodore's puckered-up lips and half-shut eyes. Perhaps the most painful and seemingly unnatural thing in a little boy or girl is the presence of a source of pain which it is conscious that it must not speak of. Poor little Theodore had grown so much of a man before his time that he had already learned to suffer and talk chaff at the same moment. Tyrone saw all this clearly enough.

They were now mounting the steep and stony ascent on which the ruin stood. It could hardly be called a road any where; perhaps it ought rather to be termed a rut. It was a broad irregular path, half overgrown with gorse-bushes and blackberry, the trailing branches of the latter sometimes floundering across the whole path, and clinging painfully to the wanderer's ankles. The clayey soil seemed to breed stones as tropical grounds breed insects, for almost every step taken by Tyrone and his companion, sent a shower of stones rolling down behind them.

The broad plain, with the river intersecting it, stretched below, lighted by the evening sun, in which the quiet waters glistened. Little sign of cultivation was there. One or two patches of grass and of potato-fields only varied the savage picturesqueness of the waste. The black bog and the gleaming water made up the whole character of the landscape. Tyrone paused almost involuntarily, and looked for a moment silently upon the scene.

"I always thought Ireland was an awfully beautiful place," said Theodore, naïvely, as they went on again.

"So it is, Theodore, but we haven't the good luck to be near one of the picturesque regions to-day. This has to me a great beauty of its own; it impresses me wonderfully, but of course I can't expect that other people should see it in the same light."

"But I thought that Ireland was awfully jolly too?"

"Well, we haven't come quite at a jolly time, you know. Perhaps people here were a little too jolly, Theodore, once upon a time, and are now doing penance. You have been in Italy, and you know that the fast comes after the carnival."

"But where are all the funny people—the fellows that make the jokes, you know? Lever and Lover, Barney Williams and Boucicault and *Punch*, and all that?"

"I am afraid the funny people are not about here just now," said Tyrone. "Perhaps they have all removed into the next parish—over that way—towards the sunset."

"But I say, you know you told me that there's nothing that way except the Atlantic."

"Just so, Theodore. People say here that the next parish is in the United States."

They had now nearly reached the entrance of the ruin. Theodore checked Tyrone for a moment with his hand, and whispered—

"I say, Tyrone, is there any chance of a fight?"

"A fight, you silly boy? With whom? Not with our poor fugitives?"

"Oh no. But suppose they should be attacked by the British troops, you'd make a fight for them, wouldn't you?"

"My good boy, what would be the use of you and I fighting against the British troops if there were any here? Besides, *I* am not a rebel, and you are a citizen of America, not concerned in our monarchical affairs."

"Oh, I'm for freedom, anyhow! Look here, I've brought one of the revolvers!"

And Theodore showed his weapon in high glee, the first glee he had manifested for some time.

"You foolish fellow, how did you come by that, and what on earth do you want of it?"

"Well, there may be a fight, you know. You don't mean to surrender, do you? I should say a Tyrone doesn't usually surrender?"

"But, Theodore, nobody asks me to surrender; there isn't anything to surrender for. I haven't been making war against anybody; and as for you, why you have been at peace with us since 1814, I think, and you wouldn't surely attack England without at least a previous declaration of war?"

Theodore smiled. "You're chaffing me now," he said; "but a fellow can't help being sorry that he hasn't a chance of doing something. Anyhow, I'll keep the revolver, it may come in useful."

Tyrone was *distrait;* engrossed with his own thoughts; full of melancholy and gloom, which their mission did not

tend to lighten. He did not think of contesting the point with Theodore, who indeed would have regarded it as an unpardonable offence to his manly dignity if it were suggested that he could not be trusted with a revolver. Probably this view of the case did not even occur to Tyrone, who, like most Irishmen of his class, had been familiar with the use of firearms almost since he ceased to play with a coral and bells.

The way was steep and rugged; the ascent was slow; for, when every now and then Tyrone's vigorous strides took him ahead of his young companion, Theodore puffed and toiled so terribly to keep in line that at last, out of consideration for the boy's little figure, Tyrone slackened his pace deliberately, and did not allow it to exceed. The very slowness of the motion tended to deepen the melancholy which sank upon the young man. In the grey evening light, in the sinking sun, the grim blackness of the boggy waste beneath, the faint moaning of the wind among the ruins they were reaching, there seemed some sympathetic recognition of his own darkened and purposeless life. Tyrone was intensely sensitive to all the pulsations of nature's moods. The true Celtic temperament is open at every pore to the influence of atmosphere and breezy sunlight and starlight. The Celt is hardly ever a firm, self-contained, self-sufficing individuality. The wind, the trees, the roll of the sea, the evening clouds have a thrilling sympathetic power over him, which in his heart makes the natural hardly separable from the supernatural.

At last they reached the ruin.

"Here's sorry cheer," said Tyrone.

"I know what that's from," said Theodore, panting from his exertions; "it's from 'The Heir o' Linn;' it's in 'Percy's Reliques.'"

They stood in the old and crumbling entrance. In the principal hall of the great square tower or keep there was nobody. All the stairs, floorings, and the roof were gone; only four naked walls stood there, ivy-grown and tenanted by crows and bats. Huge fallen stones that had once formed part of roof, or wall, or battlement, lay on the ground exactly as they had fallen there, and were gradually embedding themselves and being overgrown by moss and ivy and wild flowers.

The sound of their feet among the stones evidently caused

a disturbance in the inner room, if a roofless division may be called so, for there was a sudden whispering and shuffling, and presently the big ragged man who had brought the message showed himself in the opening. With a broad grin of welcome and recognition he disappeared, and in a moment the manly form of General Macan presented itself. The General was clothed in some sort of green uniform, which gave evident tokens of having been dragged through bushes and brushwood, and slept in and marched in and otherwise hardly entreated. On his head was the ordinary cap of an American soldier, and he had flung across his arm the coarse light blue cloak so familiar to all eyes that have seen an American regiment. The gallant General looked thin, yellow, and wasted, but his attitude was as jaunty as ever, and his bright bold eye still glittered like that of a self-conceited bird blessed with irrepressible spirits and good nature.

Macan greeted Tyrone with a military salute.

"And doth not a meeting like this make amends?" exclaimed the hero. "I'm delighted to see you, Tyrone, although I confess it would be possible to meet under more agreeable auspices. Come in, sir, and welcome. Bedad, the string of the latch hangs on the outside of the door here, as the western men say, and we may as well be hospitable, seeing that we can't help it anyhow, and that it costs us nothing."

Macan thus rattled on as if he did not care to give Tyrone a chance of replying. He feared perhaps the regular "I told you so!" the familiar and stereotyped reproach of the man who gave the good advice and was not regarded. Tyrone had no such intention. The dignity of failure was around the ruined Fenians, and Tyrone instinctively treated Macan with a high and genial courtesy.

"I came at once on receiving your letter," he said. "I only wish you were better lodged, General Macan. I would apologize for this wretched old ruin, but that you know all about the condition of things as well as I do."

"Don't say a word, my dear fellow, not a word, I beg of you. It's delightful. We have what the New England lasses call a high old time of it here. Sure that reminds me that in asking you in I've only been doing the honours of your own house! And how are you, my dear young friend?" (This was to Theodore.) "Sure it's a long time since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and you've grown out of all remem-

brance. How's that beautiful lady your dear mamma? Quite well? I'm delighted to hear it. When last we met it was in a different scene, in the gilded saloons of the west-end; we met in lighted halls, as the song says. Devil a one of them was as well lighted as this, morning, noon, and night. Wont you come in, Colonel Tyrone? There's one or two old friends inside, or old enemies maybe, but you're not a man to keep up the memory of a quarrel at a wrong time like this, I know."

So saying Macan, with a superb wave of the hand, pointed Tyrone to the inner room, if room it could be called, of the ruin. Standing in the opening where there once was a door, he called out as a master of the ceremonies might do—

"Gentlemen, I have the honour to announce Mr. Tyrone."

Tyrone could at first only see two or three dark figures, one seated on a stone, one lounging near a window. He felt that he had better for the moment throw himself into the spirit of the thing, and he said—

"Gentlemen, I am sorry to have to do the honours of so miserable a home, which can't even give you shelter. Such as it is, it is all that is left, and you are welcome, and you should be if it were worth occupying. I am not certain whether I have the pleasure of knowing——"

"You bet you have," said Macan. "Don't you see Phil Quentin and old bully-boy Charette?"

Quentin only nodded his head and turned away. Tyrone wondered to see him there, but said nothing. He could now discern figures, and he saw that one of Charette's arms was bound up as if for a wound.

"General Charette," Tyrone said, "I owe you an apology this long time for a very sudden and impulsive act. Let me hope that you feel free to accept an apology, remembering that it was not wholly unprovoked by you."

Charette made a profound bow. "I was the first in error," he said; "Mr. Tyrone is the first in making the amend; therefore am I doubly overcome. I salute you, Mr. Tyrone; we are friends. I appreciate the spirit of chivalry which holds out the hand of conciliation to the defeated soldier. Our cause is lost, and destiny refused us even to die."

Tyrone was a little impatient of all this grimace and stage-play. The failure had been too ridiculous to admit of even the mock-heroic.

"Who is this?" he asked of Macan, pointing to a figure lying on the ground with a cloak thrown over it.

"The best off among the lot of us," said Macan, grimly. "*He's* all right. He's dead!"

He turned down the cloak. There lay a dead man, dressed in the same sort of uniform that Macan wore. He seemed a young and rather handsome man, with the same odd blending of Paddy from Cork and Federal soldier which Macan himself displayed. Macan looked at the body for a moment, and sighed and shrugged his shoulders, and then threw the cloak over the corpse again.

Tyrone felt a shudder go through him at the sight of this grim and realistic illustration of Fenianism carried to its logical conclusion.

"Poor fellow! was he an Irishman?"

"An Irishman who owned allegiance to the Stars and Stripes," said Macan. "Poor Joe Hogan! I knew him well; a good fellow and a true Irishman. Doing well too—a fine boot and shoe store on Fourth Avenue, head of the Bowery there; but he wanted to give his money and his life to the cause of Old Ireland. Devil a hair I'd care if we could only have shown him a good fight for his greenbacks and his blood. But 'twas a ball from a policeman's carbine that settled him. We were just able to bring him out of the muss and get him up here, Charette and myself; and he wasn't here many hours when he passed in his checks. By the immortal Jupiter, Tyrone, but you spoke like a printed book when you said that 'twould never come to a charge of cavalry! only a scrimmage with the police! Didn't I think of them words of yours many a time since? I've seen a bigger fight many a time in a bar-room in the Sixth Ward—the Big Sixth—in New York."

"You must tell me all about it," said Tyrone; "but just now I want to know what you propose to do, and how I can help you."

"Well, you see, to help me may be only involving you——"

"Never mind about that," interrupted Tyrone. "I will help you to escape, with all my heart and soul if I can."

"One word," exclaimed Quentin, who had not spoken before, coming suddenly forward, and addressing himself exclusively to Macan. "I'm not going to be helped by any one to escape, Macan; remember that! I'm not going to sneak back to New York with this disgrace on me; and I'm

not going to be taken by the English police; remember that, Macan!" He turned away abruptly.

"Never mind Phil Quentin," Macan said, in a low tone; and laying his hand on Tyrone's arm he drew him away to another part of the ruin, and signed to Theodore to come with him. "He's been queer and wild this day or two. He's lost his head, I think. I don't rightly know what to make of him. Phil's all right enough in action. I've seen him under fire many a time; but he don't amount to much somehow in any sort of suspense. He gets nervous, and all that sort of thing."

"When did he join you?" asked Tyrone. "I had no idea that he really meant to take any part in your plans."

"Man alive, no more had I! He dropped down from the clouds like, the other day, when the whole thing was over—wanting us then to attack the police barracks, and our gallant Army of Independence dwindled down to a handful that hadn't spirit enough left, poor fellows! to attack an ant's nest. Devil such wild nonsense ever you heard in all your life! 'If you wanted fighting anyhow, why the hell didn't ye come in time, Phil Quentin?' I couldn't help saying to him."

"I like him," exclaimed Theodore, with lighting eyes. "I hated him before, but I like him now because he wouldn't surrender. Death before dishonour!"

"Bully for you, my boy," said the Fenian, smiling. "The Guard dies, but never surrenders! Fine, isn't it? But the hunky-boy that said that surrendered all the same; and anyhow there's little credit in fighting the police. I'm not fond of surrendering either; but if you haven't one grain of gunpowder left, and are only two men against a couple of dozen well armed, I rather calculate Phil Sheridan or U. S. Grant himself would have to cave in."

Then Tyrone and Macan began to concert plans of escape. Tyrone was filled with a kind of admiration for the perfect coolness and the unbroken good spirits which the Fenian displayed, as well as the entire frankness and candour with which he acknowledged how utterly deceived he had been as to the supposed rebellious organization existing in Ireland. Once Tyrone broke out with the words—

"I can't understand all this unless there was deliberate treachery at the bottom of it. I am convinced there must have been something of the kind."

"By the immortal Jupiter, I've been turning the same thing

over in my mind this some time back. It's been pressing upon me. But anyhow that don't excuse me, Colonel. I've been a big fool all the same, and I've hardly any heart left for going back to New York. The thought of poor Joe Hogan lying there dead gives me a turn that I never had when I saw the whole field covered with 'em. They died for something, don't you see? This poor chap's killed for nothing. There'll be some girl crying for him, I'd bet a heap. Poor Joe! He'll never go to a picnic at Jones's Wood again, nor see the Palisades and the lovely Hudson, nor have an oyster-stew at Fulton Market!"

Suddenly a hurried tramp was heard, and the man who had brought Tyrone the message put his head in at the door, and wildly shouted, "The police! the police!"

Macan ran to a window; so did Tyrone. A body of a dozen or fourteen policemen with carbines were mounting the path, and were already near to the ruin.

"There's treachery somewhere," cried Tyrone.

"It's all up, I'm thinking," Macan said, with a rueful look.

"Leap out of that window," Tyrone exclaimed, "and scramble down the hill at the back, and hide in the bog, anyhow; there may be a chance. Put that thing up, Theodore—what nonsense! Here, give it to me. The window, Macan! Charette! It isn't very high—the fall isn't great. Quick—quick!"

Charette scrambled into the window at the back with the quickness of a cat, and disappeared at the other side. Tyrone was pointing with one hand to another window which might give Macan an equal chance, and stretching out the other hand imperatively for the revolver which little Theodore was still reluctant to give. But Quentin suddenly dashed between them and clutched the revolver with a cry of triumph. "No surrender!" he shouted like a maniac, and he rushed for the large room and the principal entrance.

"Catch hold of Phil Quentin," exclaimed Macan, "or he'll do some mischief. Never mind us."

Tyrone sprang after Quentin—so did Theodore. Macan looked round for a moment, studied the height of the window through which he might yet escape, heard the tramp of some of the police on that very side, and coolly began to whistle. "We're surrounded," he said; "it's all up now." And he too went towards the door whither his companions had gone. The quick crack of two pistol shots made him rush thither,

but before he could get near enough to see what had happened there was the rattle of a volley of musketry and one wild yell.

What had happened was this.

The moment he seized the revolver Quentin ran to the great entrance. The police were near at hand, a little column of eight or ten, for they had detached a few of their party to go round the ruin. Quentin yelled again his frantic "No surrender!" and fired two shots point-blank at the police, wounding one man in the shoulder, who let fall his carbine. Tyrone rushed upon Quentin, and endeavoured to drag him away; while Theodore, who now began at last to see the madness of the whole thing, leaped at Quentin's arm, and flung it up so cleverly that a third shot went high into the air. But the evening was darkening, the police could only see that there were several figures in the doorway from which the fire of the revolver had come; there was a halt, a word of command, and a volley was poured in upon the little party. Colonel Quentin gave a scream, half defiance, half agony, and fell forward on the ground, Theodore falling with him. Tyrone felt a smart like the crack of a whip across his arm. He did not stop, however, to think of that now, but stepping over Quentin's fallen body, he stood clear in the fading light, and called out in as calm a tone as he could assume, well knowing the all-importance of composure at such a moment—

"Don't fire again. There's no resistance here—no weapons; the revolver was fired by a madman! You know me, policemen; I am Tyrone!"

Macan here came up side by side with our hero.

"Reserve your fire, boys," said the Fenian, composedly, "until you have armed enemies to blaze at. The battle's over—fought on the one side by a solitary lunatic with a boy's pistol."

"Do you surrender?" the chief of the police demanded, still not quite certain about the realities of things, and doubtful which were friends and which enemies.

"Needs must," said the Fenian. "I am a general without an army or an ounce of powder."

"I can explain my share in all this, Mr. Wetherall," said Tyrone to the sub-inspector, "and I surrender, if you like; in the meantime let us see to the wounded man."

They lifted Quentin from the ground. He had received two bullets—one in the shoulder, one in the neck—and was

bleeding slowly and in drops. Poor little Theodore, whom nobody knew to be injured, so soon had he risen to his feet, now staggered and fell. Tyrone caught him in his arms. A bullet had torn through his clothes just at the hip. Tyrone clasped him, and bent over him in fear and agony.

"How did the boy come here?" the sub-inspector asked, angrily.

"He came with me," Tyrone answered, vehemently. "He came with *me*, on a peaceful errand—evidence enough that it *was* peaceful—and he was trying to stop that madman when your men fired. I don't blame you, Wetherall; but it's the curse of your office here to have only madmen and boys to fight with!"

The inspector and some of his men came round, with pitying eyes and words of regret, while Tyrone endeavoured to find out the nature and danger of the wound. Tyrone was kneeling on the ground on one knee, with the boy supported on the other; the inspector, stooping down, endeavoured to assist him. A little in the background two men were engaged in handcuffing the reluctant Macan; two others had just brought round the gallant Charette, whose leap for safety had been made just too late, and who was now undergoing the manacling operation. The one policeman who had been wounded was having a handkerchief tied round his arm and wincing at the pain, but not uttering a word of groan or grumble. Two or three other men were making preparations to carry the still senseless Quentin down the hill. The moon was just rising softly, and the murmur of the river was heard in the silence. The ruin, looking black against the growing moonlight, formed an appropriate and pictorial background.

Suddenly, as Tyrone bent over poor Theodore, two successive drops fell upon the child's pale forehead. Tyrone hastily drew his arm away.

"You are wounded, Mr. Tyrone," the police officer said, in a tone of surprise.

"Only a touch—not worth talking of," he answered, hastily. "But my poor boy!"

"And so you're wounded, Tyrone," Macan exclaimed. "See that now! The innocent suffering for the guilty as usual. Old Mother England punishes the wrong child! Well, Tyrone, you may say with Sarsfield, 'If only that blood had been spilt for Ireland!'"

Just at this moment a faint thrill ran like a ripple over

Theodore's face, and the child's limbs contracted. Tyrone and the inspector watched in breathless eagerness. Theodore opened his eyes, stared wonderingly, then recognised Tyrone, and smiled. Tyrone could hardly repress a cry of joy.

"I say, Tyrone," the boy murmured, "it's nothing, you know; I'm all right. I'm awfully jolly. But"—(his voice grew weaker, and he spoke with a gasp and a clutching of the breath, while his hand caught at Tyrone's, and he endeavoured to raise himself towards the ear of the latter)—"if I should die, you know, I'd like you to tell *her*—Jennie—that I wasn't afraid, and that I died like a man!"

"Like a man!" Macan echoed, between his teeth. "Oh, by the immortal Jupiter! only give us anywhere on Irish soil ten thousand such men and we'd drive the Saxon into the sea!"

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

And now Jennie Aspar's life had passed into a new phase. She had in a few months, almost in a few weeks, run nearly the whole gamut of the experience of a woman's heart. She had looked on death, and known passionate love and the pangs of jealousy, and the grief of desertion and despair. Now there opened for her yet a new chapter of suffering; for she acknowledged a heavy self-accusation and remorse. She blamed herself for all that had happened, and rated herself as utterly faithless. In her misery she exaggerated her credulity into an unpardonable treason against her love and her lover. She set herself deliberately down as one who had broken faith, and was unworthy either of pity or of pardon. Like a very woman too, she had a curious pride and something like gladness in the thought that, after all, her lover had been true. It was only *she* who was false. The idol was not gone; only the worshipper had been an infidel for an hour. She could, at least, set the idol up again and distantly worship it, and secretly pray. "I understand the Nut-brown Maid now," she said to herself. "I know why she offered to go to the greenwood with him, even though the other woman should be there too. I couldn't understand it before, and thought it so base of her. How stupid I must have been! The Nut-brown Maid knew her lover too well to believe such a story. She knew it was only to try her.

She never for a moment believed the story about the other woman. She was too true to *him* to be deceived."

The very day after the departure of Colonel Quentin, Mrs. Pinel came to Jennie with an urgent message from the invalid woman at Clarges Street, beseeching our heroine to come and see her. Jennie simply told Alicia she was going out—did not tell her where, and accompanied Johanna. The poor relict of the dead Maurice Tyrone was herself near death; and she knew it, and was glad of it. Besides a wasting weakness, the result of long years of mental distress and bodily privation, she was conscious of the existence of heart disease, and might pass away at any moment. Her sole anxieties now were for her child, and to show some gratitude to Tyrone. Otherwise she declared herself happy, for she would soon go to her husband.

The invalid's words soon touched Jennie's heart, and unsealed her lips. Our heroine had been so utterly lonely that the sympathetic tones which invited her confidence brought it forth in a flood, and she poured out to this strange listener her whole love and grief. The new friend told Jennie, on her side, some of the singular story of the New York will, and explained, with such conjecture as she could, the influence it probably had upon the part played by Colonel Quentin. Jennie came day after day, and seemed now to be drawn by a strong and sudden affection or affinity to the child who had been the innocent cause of so much suffering to her. In the story of the will and the New York property, it must be owned that she took but little interest. Whether Tyrone was to be rich or poor was the same to her when she loved him. She could not separate herself clearly enough from him, even yet, to have any distinct and disinterested wishes for his future, now that she had lost him. But to please the anxious invalid, who was desirous of some consultation with some business man, Jennie promised to get her sister to speak to Mr. Prinker. Alicia did speak to him, and begged him to go and find out the truth of the whole affair, from first to last. Mr. Prinker went, at first alone and sceptical, then with his lawyer.

Jennie did not go when Mr. Prinker went. For some days she did not go at all. She felt a certain timid shame about crossing that threshold, even though she knew that Tyrone was far away. She kept from the place all the more, because she found herself so often giving way to a vain, and, as she

thought, shameful longing that Tyrone's foot might be heard in the hall, and that he might surprise her there, and pity and pardon her. Oh, if he *had* come, she thought, no sense of woman's dignity could keep her from throwing herself into his arms, and beseeching him to forgive her and love her. And then she felt Quentin's kisses on her lips, and hated herself, and remained at home, and went about the rooms, pale, cold, like a ghost—feeling weary of the sun, and longing for something, anything, to happen.

Something did happen accordingly.

Mr. Prinker came home one evening in a rather excited condition, and instantly took Alicia into his confidence.

"Very strange, my dear," he said, "but doesn't some one say something about truth being stranger than fiction? This strange story is all true. There is such a will, and the money is all right. Bonnycastle's people have telegraphed to New York—I thought I'd risk the expense—and we have an answer to-day. It's all right. Somebody stands to come in for a lot of money. This poor woman has made her will. Bonnycastle's people have taken her instructions, and I'm to be one of the witnesses; and do you know what she does with the money?"

"No, dear, I don't."

"Leaves half to the little girl; and, by Jove! half to Tyrone, on condition of his taking care of the child."

"Good gracious! Then he'll be a rich man, after all, Robert?"

"Well, that isn't quite so certain. Of course, if he complied with the conditions he'd have it all; but he'll never do *that*. *She* wants him, I fancy, to feel himself free to marry when he likes."

Alicia looked up, but did not venture to express the thought that was in her mind. Would Jennie and Tyrone be reconciled *now?*

"But then," Mr. Prinker went on, "here comes the very strangest part of the business. There's another life between Tyrone and this poor woman; that is, you know, that if Tyrone breaks any of the conditions the money goes not to her, but to another person, if he be living."

"Oh, then, there's not much chance for Mr. Tyrone; but is that other person living, dear?"

"Yes, he's living; *that* you and I can tell. Now, Alicia, just try if you can guess who this other person is."

"I could never guess anything. Did I ever see him?"

"That you did. What do you say to Philip Quentin?"

"Our Quentin?"

"Our Quentin himself! Did you ever hear of anything so strange? One way or the other, Alicia, that little girl upstairs seems as if she might have had a rich husband."

"She'll never marry Colonel Quentin, Robert."

Robert thought to himself, "After what has happened, I don't suppose Quentin would ever marry her."

"I wonder Quentin never told you anything of this, Robert?"

"Well, yes; but I suppose he didn't like talking of mere possibilities—things that seemed castles in the air, and all that. Besides, it turns out that Quentin is only an adopted name, and he mightn't care about going into family affairs. I fancy he's a very sensitive fellow. I wonder where is Quentin all this time? At his office to-day they told me he had gone out of town somewhere, and they didn't know yet when he was to return. I'm afraid he's taken this quarrel with your sister very much to heart, Alicia. Jennie was wrong, you know—quite wrong. There was no fault to find with Quentin."

At this moment Jennie entered the room, looking very pale and with lustrous eyes, and Mr. Prinker betook himself to his evening paper, which had just come in. But he had hardly opened it, when he started from his seat, exclaimed, "Good Lord!" read the paragraph again with eyes straining through his double eyeglass, and then startled out of all caution, cried, "Good Heavens! Alicia—Jennie—read *that!*"

Both the young women read the paragraph together, breathless.

It was a piece of telegraphic news headed, "Fenian Affray in Ireland. Capture of one Fenian Leader, and Death of Another."

Thus it was worded:—

"The police made an attack last night upon the ruins of Tyrone Castle (the property of Mr. Tyrone, late M.P. for the county), where several of the Fenians escaped after the late outbreak had sheltered themselves. The Fenians fired on the police, wounding one man. The police returned the fire, killing one of the Fenian leaders, and succeeded in capturing the others. Among the prisoners are General Felix Macan, of New York, and the notorious General Charette, who so

lately escaped from prison in England. The man killed was a Colonel in the regular army of the United States. His name is Philip Quentin, and he had been living for some time in London."

Beneath came another telegram, headed, "Later news—this morning."

"The Fenian Colonel Philip Quentin was not killed on the spot. He was removed to the town, where he died last night. Mr. Tyrone, late M.P., was with Quentin when he died. Mr. Tyrone was in or near the castle at the time of the attack, but is understood to have gone there only by chance to show the ruins to a friend with whom he has lately been staying here. He was accidentally wounded in the arm, but not seriously. His companion, a young gentleman from London, was also wounded; it is feared mortally."

"Latest—this afternoon: Mr. Tyrone's wound is slight; young Mr. Lorn, his companion, is now expected to recover. The Fenians say that there was no intention to resist the police, that the affair was accidental, and that nobody fired from the castle but the man who died last night, Colonel Quentin."

"He's wounded!" exclaimed Jennie, thinking only of one; and for the moment forgetting even poor little Theodore.

"Colonel Quentin's dead!" said Alicia, turning pale with pity and terror.

"And by Jove," the financier could not help saying, "Tyrone will come in for half the money, after all!"

* * * * * *

While Jennie Aspar's brain was still dizzy with the news that crushed down so many seeming realities of her life, the sick woman sent for her and advised her to throw aside all conventional scruples and write frankly to Tyrone. "Don't destroy both your lives for a girl's mistake and folly. You know he loves you."

"I can't," said Jennie, sadly and without thinking of her words. "He is likely to be rich now. If he were poor I would ask him, ask him myself to forgive me, and—yes, to marry me! There! I have said it, but I can't now."

"Then let him be poor," said the sick woman, with a sudden energy lighting her eyes. "Child, I admire you for choosing poverty and love. *We* did—such poverty as you will never know. Thank God for it! I live in the memory of our love, and shall die blessing it and believing in its renewal."

Before many days the Messrs. Bonnycastle, solicitors, had received instructions to alter the will, and Jennie heard news which she was bidden to keep a secret, but which made her start and brought a sudden colour into her cheeks. That evening she wrote to Tyrone.

## CHAPTER XL.

Yes, Tyrone was with Quentin when Quentin died. In disjointed but still intelligible words the dying man frankly told him his name and his schemes; told him how his identity could be established; told him even of his treachery. Tyrone listened to all this in silence as he stood by the bedside in the room of the inn whither Quentin had been borne. He asked no question that concerned Quentin's treason, and could not be certain whether it was some secret summons from him that had brought the police to the ruins, but he inferred that this was so, and that Quentin had done it chiefly in the hope that a confused fight might follow, and he, Tyrone, perish.

"I played against you all through, Cousin Tyrone," Quentin said, with a ghastly flicker of humour, "and I have lost all; you and fortune were too many for me. I am glad to die, for I should be ashamed to live now, seeing that you have won and that I have lost all. I want you to promise me one thing—it's not much—I wouldn't ask you much—but this. Come nearer; you'll not refuse a defeated dying man, Tyrone?"

Tyrone promised that anything he could do should faithfully be done.

"Then it's this. There is one person in the world who—still—thinks me—" (his voice was growing faint and hoarse, and he spoke with extreme difficulty, two or three words at a time) "a man of honour—and a gentleman. Don't undeceive him—don't—poor Macan!"

So all the schemes were over: ambition and greed and love and hate. Nothing remained of earthly interest but the melancholy, eager wish that the one friend who had believed in the dying man might believe in him still. In the shadow of the coming death all else was swallowed up. The forms that made so much of his later life had faded from around his bed. Let them go, he cared not now' That

one passionate yearning for an unsullied place in the memory of his only friend was perhaps Quentin's best claim upon the inheritance of the Better Life.

The next day the prisoners were removed to the capital town of the county. They were guarded by a strong force of police and some cavalry, for a sort of idea was still lingering that a rescue might possibly be attempted. But nothing of the kind was tried. For a time at least the very ashes of the conspiracy seemed to have been scattered to the winds.

Tyrone had no difficulty in making it clear that his visit to the castle had no connexion with Fenianism, although of course he frankly acknowledged that he had gone with the hope of enabling the unfortunate fugitives to escape, and he was ready to meet any prosecution that the authorities might think fit to institute against him on this score. None, however, was instituted. The Government showed a wise resolution not to make too much of the affair. It may as well be stated here at once that though Macan and Charette were subsequently convicted and sentenced to long periods of penal servitude, the punishment was remitted when the disappearance of Fenianism rendered an amnesty for past offences expedient as well as generous. It may relieve the minds of those who happen to take an interest in the subject to know that General Charette subsequently fought for the Commune, and that General Macan having been unsuccessfully "run" for Congress, was endowed with a valuable appointment in the Custom House, New York, where, to adopt a phrase of his own, "long may he wave."

This, however, is a glimpse in advance. Long before the prisoners came to trial, Tyrone had seen the body of Philip Quentin laid in earth, and had rejoiced over the convalescence of little Theodore Lorn. Tyrone hardly left him for the first two days and nights. But when that interval had passed he was relieved from his watching, if the phrase "relief" may properly be used in such a case, by the arrival of Mrs. Lorn. Immediately on hearing the news of her son's accident, the lady hurried from London and dropped down upon the dull and decaying little Irish town with a surgeon from the metropolis, engaged at no matter what expense, an hospital nurse, and her own maid.

Mrs. Lorn had opportunity enough of playing many interesting parts in succession, or in combination, during Theodore's confinement. She was the beautiful young mother

watching in picturesque anguish by the bedside of her son. She always knew that she looked to great advantage when kneeling in prayer. In former years, while travelling up from the South in one of the Mississippi steamers, and when the heat of the weather used to give her a fair excuse for leaving her cabin door open at night, she loved to be seen kneeling by her bedside in picturesque déshabille, with the dark hair streaming over her shoulders and back, and her hands clasped and head bowed in prayer. From beneath the clasped hands the prayerful eyes would dart many a quick sidelong glance as a step was heard near the door, to see whether the passer-by was attracted by the attitude of the fair penitent. Now in her attendance upon Theodore she could be pathetic, heroic, full of grief and full of hope, just as she pleased. To do her justice, however, she did not think of all this until the boy had been pronounced entirely out of danger.

Moreover, she had two new parts to enact—that of the forgiven and forgiver. For Tyrone, the innocent cause of Theodore's being brought into danger, had been carried away into such expression of regret that a delightful and magnanimous pardon and absolution was but a natural offer from the boy's mother. Then being herself swept along by the situation, the exciting conditions around her, a generous emotional impulse and sincere repentance, she actually flung herself on her knees before Tyrone, and confessed the cruel wrong she had helped to commit towards him and Jennie Aspar. Tyrone thus learned for the first time the terrible treachery of which he and she had been the victims. He drew back from the penitent in positive horror and disgust.

"You find it hard to pardon me?" she said, plaintively.

So he did. He turned away, and for a moment could hardly speak. She rose slowly and stood near him in an attitude of humility. She could not understand the depth of his emotion, and that perhaps had been all through her sole excuse. She never could for one instant enter into the heart, or put herself in the place, of another. Nor did she even now realize the depth of her own treachery or the impression it must make on others, even on those who were not its victims. But she prayed and pleaded for pardon. To her the excitement of shame was better than no excitement at all.

"Can you find *no* excuse for me even in my motive?" she pleaded. "Must I reveal myself all? Do you not know—can't you guess why I did this? And is there a man living

who would not take such a motive into account when he is prayed for his forgiveness?"

"Hush, pray, Mrs. Lorn," Tyrone said, turning round, and speaking now in a hard firm voice; "I had rather hear no more disclosures of any kind. I thank you for having told me this even now, although it comes too late. You have ruined two lives I suppose; but if you care for words of forgiveness from me—well then, take the words 'I forgive you;' and I will try to feel them hereafter more strongly than I do now. I hope you may be able to forgive yourself."

He left her abruptly; and going into Theodore's room, took a hasty and an affectionate leave of the boy. Then he left the little town instantly and returned to the capital of the county where his unsuccessful contest had taken place. He passed a gloomy night of retrospect and calculation, and of little hope. For he still felt a bitter sense of disappointment with Jennie Aspar. "She should not have believed it; she should have appealed to me, to me at once, and a word would have set it all right. If she had loved me as she said, how could she have given me up on the first breath of such a story?" This he kept saying over and over to himself, striving thus to crush down every natural yearning for reconciliation and hope of renewed love. As if a man and a woman ever approached to conviction by the same process! As if Jennie Aspar ever could have suspected the bare existence of the treachery which alone could have suggested a doubt of the proofs arrayed before her. As if a woman's wounded love and pride could ever pause to think of remote and possible explanations.

Still it is plain that these two hearts were already reconciled, or at least drawn together for reconciliation. Perhaps if Jennie had not taken the first step she might have herself been sued for her restored love by him. But the very day after his interview with Mrs. Lorn he received three abrupt lines, saying—

"I was cruelly deceived; I was miserably weak. Oh, forgive me! I loved you always and would have died for you *even then*. "JENNIE ASPAR."

Tyrone wrote back pages of eloquent rhapsody, and made quick preparation to follow them. This time he was determined to listen to no details of prudence, but to marry forthwith and solve, if needs were, the problem of how to live on

three hundred a year. For that was well nigh all that now represented what was once the property of the Tyrones.

Mrs. Lorn meanwhile was likewise preparing to leave Ireland with her boy, who could now bear removal. She was determined to return at once to America. She paid a visit of tender sentiment to the grave of Philip Quentin, and laid a dainty immortelle upon his tomb. "He was a man," she sighed, "a man and a hero; and he loved me. He was I think, after all, the only man I ever loved! Ah yes, we can love but once, and that in one's spring time! When we were young, Philip Quentin and I, we loved each other. We never should have been parted. We are the victims of Destiny! And now I am fading and he is dead! Even the grave can hardly have changed him more than life has changed *me!* Farewell my first love and my last!"

She left the grave at last, quite satisfied in her own mind that she and Quentin had been faithful true lovers, that he alone had really filled her heart, and that only a hard destiny had parted them. She compassionated herself and wept very much. But she will probably not cry her beautiful eyes quite away. The voyage across the Atlantic may perhaps restore her a little; and then she will go to Saratoga, for the season; and the immortelle upon her hero's grave will do well to wither as fast as it can.

Tyrone paid a last visit to Macan, whom he found in his prison, cheery of speech as usual, though looking rather thin and yellow.

"Come now, this is real kind," the bold Fenian exclaimed, holding out his big hand. "This is the time to try one's friends, sir, and you shine out, Tyrone. And so they tell me you've given up the British Parliament. I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart. Do you ever mean to repair the old castle?"

Tyrone shook his head.

"Let the old times go altogether! Well, perhaps it's best. Perhaps it's the effect of solitary meditation, sir, but, by the immortal Jupiter, I've been fancying we have a deal too much of that same thinking over the past among us Irishmen! Well, God save Ireland, anyhow! And they tell me too you're going to be married. To that real pretty girl that I saw at poor old Granger's long ago? Bedad, those were pleasant times too, though Granger was a terrible bore himself. You are going to be married really?"

"Really and truly."

"'Tis you have all the luck! Beauty's better than golden store. Well, I wish you joy with all my heart, Tyrone. I'm afraid I'm bound to die an old bachelor myself. Sure there's some good in that too, for there's no one to come crying about me the night before the execution, and I never could stand the sight of a woman in tears, especially if she was at all good looking."

"Nonsense," Tyrone said, quickly, "your life is as safe as mine, Macan. This British Government isn't quite so savage as you think, and be assured that no effort——"

"Tyrone, I beg your pardon," Macan said, gravely; "I must ask you not to say a word of that. No efforts to get any favour for me from the Saxon Government! I played the game, and, by the immortal, I'm not afraid to pay the forfeit!"

Tyrone said no more, willing to humour the fancies and respecting the genuine courage of the man. But he had no fears for Macan's life.

"And poor Phil Quentin's buried in Irish soil," Macan said, after a moment's pause. "Well, he deserved the honour. He was an honest fellow. Do you know that he ran his head into all that muss only because he had some funds of ours, and he'd rather risk his life a thousand times over than seem to leave us without the money at a time like that? Phil had his faults, but we don't think of them now, Tyrone, do we?

"'When cold in the earth lies the friend we have loved.'"

And Macan trolled forth in his fine voice some of the words that Moore has adapted to the thrilling pathos of the Scottish air "Lochaber." "Yes, he had an honest soul, had poor Phil! I loved him, sir, like a brother."

Tyrone could not look up. He had learned but too certainly what part Quentin had played, but even had Quentin himself never besought his silence he would not for any consideration on earth have breathed a doubt of his sincerity to the one comrade who thus deplored him. He wrung Macan's rough and coarse-grained hand and left him. As he quitted the room he could hear the Fenian crooning to himself in a low voice the words, over and over again—

"When cold in the earth lies the friend thou hast loved,
Be his faults and his follies forgot by thee then!"

"Amen!" said Tyrone. "Be his faults and his follies forgotten. May those who love me forget mine as well."

## CHAPTER THE LAST.

So Tyrone hurried back to London and found Jennie. Let us pass over all description of their meeting. Enough to say that they met and were happy. They were married quietly, and Tyrone took Jennie to pass a few weeks in Ireland before he settled down to his new life of work. It was only on the day before their marriage that Jennie learned from Carpenter how her sister and herself had had their first start in life, after their father's death, with Tyrone's money. Carpenter, honest fellow, had a remorseful conviction that he had helped to wrong Tyrone, and so made this disclosure in token of repentance. When Jennie spoke of it to Tyrone, with eyes of tearful pride and joy, he put the thing smilingly off, and assured her, which was the truth, that he had forgotten all about it.

They were leaving London for Holyhead. At Euston Square Station, when they were taking their seats, there was immense bustle about a lady who, with several servants and a mass of luggage, was going to Liverpool. The lady as she passed flashed her dark eyes upon Tyrone and Jennie, and then swept on without seeming to recognise them. It was Mrs. Lorn. Then came Theodore with his arm in a sling, and clutching in his other hand some books and papers which he had just been buying. His bright little eye rested on our newly married pair, and he ran up to them with reddening cheeks.

"Oh, I say, here's a chance, Tyrone! Jennie—oh no, I mean——"

"You only mean Jennie dear," said our heroine. "My darling old comrade, Theodore!"

"We're going away, you know," said the boy, "going from Liverpool to-morrow. Good-bye, Tyrone, good-bye, dear old fellow! Oh, if we had only an hour to talk! I say, come to America?"

"Perhaps we may some time, Theodore," said Tyrone, "but you know I've proved rather an unlucky companion for you. I see your arm is not all right yet."

"Oh, it's right enough. Wasn't that a grand row? If

you'd seen us, Jennie, with the bullets whistling round us! And that unfortunate cad Quentin—— No, confound it, I didn't mean that! Well, it was a strange adventure, though. Didn't I stand fire well, Tyrone?"

"Like a soldier," Tyrone answered, smiling; "he is a regular hero, Jennie."

The boy blushed deeply. "Time's up and I must be off," he said. "God bless you, Tyrone; God bless you, Jennie—both of you—both of you!"

He let fall some of his books when giving his one little hand in turn to each; but Jennie picked up the books before even Tyrone could move, and she took Theodore round the neck and kissed him. He rubbed the tears from his eyes as he ran for the train; and they could still see him waving his little cap to them in farewell from the carriage window.

"Something strange has been the matter with him lately," said Jennie, thoughtfully.

"Have you never guessed anything of it?" Tyrone asked, looking down into her eyes.

"Never, dearest." She looked up, wonderingly. "What is it?"

Tyrone only touched her hand gently and smiled his frank Celtic smile, with its gleam of tenderness almost pathetic.

"Nothing that will harm him, darling; it's only Cymon and Iphigenia renewed. Theodore has a heart too full and tender for his years, and doesn't know it."

When Tyrone was married, the property of the old man of New York passed at once to the widow of his son. It was useless to her. She did not remain long in life. One tender spring day she seemed greatly to rally, had been steadily mending to all appearance for days before, and she ventured to take a drive with her little girl. She ordered the coachman to drive to the Catholic burial-bround at Kensal Green, and she took the child in to show her her father's grave, for the girl had come to know that she had no father. Presently the girl ran screaming for help, and several mourners hurried from other parts of the ground. They found only a dead woman lying on the grave of the other Maurice Tyrone. She had gone to her husband.

It was only when some days had passed away, and the will of the dead man was read, that Tyrone knew why Jennie had plucked up courage to ask him frankly for the renewal of their love. Half the money of the old man had been left to

Jennie herself on consideration of her taking charge of the girl; the rest for the child's own benefit. Only a ring was bequeathed to Tyrone, "as a token of undying gratitude and my wishes for his happiness."

"Dear love," said Jennie, "if you were marked out to be rich at that time, how could I ever have had the courage to ask you in that rude way to marry me? But it was only a sort of kindly fraud after all, for the money was meant for you. *She* said more than once that it ought to be yours—and not hers, I mean—for the old man's dream was to restore the honour of the name of Tyrone, and she, poor thing, had no husband or son. So that most of it, at least, is yours in all honour, for we'll make that name one of dignity and pride again, shan't we, my love?" And she looked up to him with sparkling eyes of pride and affection.

"Jennie," he said, smiling and kissing her, "I am so happy and I love you so much that I have almost forgotten the great destinies of the Tyrones."

"Never!" she exclaimed, eagerly. "You shall go into the House again, and begin over again your brilliant career. Do you think I have no ambition and no pride in my husband? And we'll try to serve dear old Ireland, too—*my* Ireland as well as yours now, love—please God!"

"Please God!" Tyrone exclaimed, with an earnestness now equal to her own. "As poor Macan used to say, 'God save Ireland, anyhow!'"

"And England—*our* England?"

"Our England, indeed. God save England, and bless her! She has given me my love and my wife, and my heart should be cold indeed if it did not warm to her name."

They pressed each other's hands and were silent.

Tyrone shortly after had an idea of buying or renting the old cottage on the Surrey common, near the pool with the islet and the Scotch fir and the other objects so dear in the memory of their love. He thought of improving and ornamenting the house, furnishing it so as to be a fitting casket for his treasure, and then making it their English home. But when he spoke of this to Jennie she smiled and shook her head.

"My memories of that house are too much mixed up with sadness," she said. "I would rather steal from it all the happy associations and bring them away to live in a bright new palace of their own with you and me. Any home of ours must

be a palace for me, but I should never feel that *that* was really our home. Let us leave it to the ghosts of old days. I want you all to myself. I only want the new life that began with you. That was the real life I used to dream about and wonder over and yearn for long ago. I want no other but that."

And so we commend her to that bright new Real Life and leave her. Sometimes, even in life, the reality is better than the dream.

THE END.





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